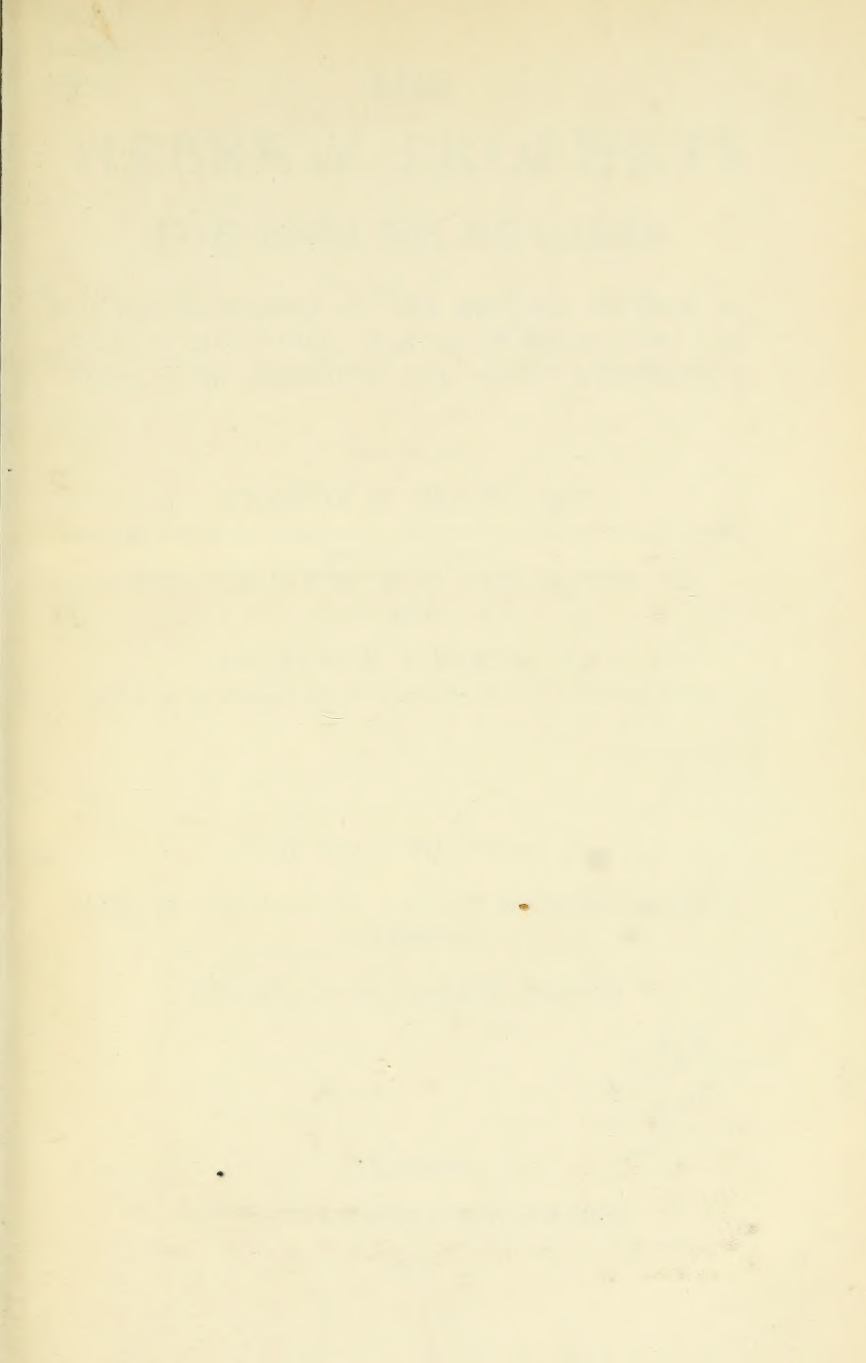


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THE HEBREW PROPHETS FOR ENGLISH READERS

IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE REVISED VERSION OF
THE ENGLISH BIBLE, PRINTED IN THEIR POETICAL
FORM, WITH HEADINGS AND BRIEF ANNOTATION

EDITED BY

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IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. II—ZEPHANIAH, NAHUM, HABAKKUK, AND
JEREMIAH

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PREFACE

WHEN this edition was first proposed some doubts were raised as to whether, with the many editions and commentaries on the Prophetic Books already published, there was really room for a work of this sort. In the Preface to the first volume we pointed out our reasons for dissenting from this view. We believed that there was a distinct need for something which should come between the ordinary commentary, which is valuable for purposes of reference and textual exegesis, and the bare text of A.V. or R.V. of our English Bible, which the average reader often finds difficult to understand. And we now think that we are fully justified in saying that such doubts are entirely dispersed by the very gratifying reception which the first volume has met with, especially in the Press. The work has been felt to possess a certain educational value of its own, not so much by repeating what has been said about the Prophets, but as bringing the Prophets themselves nearer to the heart and mind of the reader. We are glad to add that the edition has already been adopted as a textbook in some of our schools. In addition to what has been already said on the subject in the Preface to Vol. I, we should like to mention our special indebtedness in this volume to Keil's excellent, if somewhat over-conservative, commentary on *Jeremiah*.

F. H. W.

F. E. P.

BAINTON RECTORY

October 7, 1909

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A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE FOR THE SECOND VOLUME¹

B.C.	PROPHETS AND KINGS OF JUDAH	GENERAL HISTORY	CITABLE REFERENCES
750-625	PERIOD OF ASSYRIAN ASCENDANCY (continued from the Chron. Table in vol. i)		
698-641	Manasseh.	(see Chron. Table in vol. i, note 6)	2 Kings xvi. 2; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1-18.
692-666		Tihakah, king of Egypt (25th of Ethiopian dynasty).	2 Kings xix. 9; Isa. xxxvii. 9.
681-668		Esar-haddon, king of Assyria, Sennacherib's successor.	2 Kings xix. 37; Isa. xxxviii. 38.
677		Esar-haddon subdues Sidon, departs Sidonians, and receives tribute (676) from Manasseh and twenty-one princes of Palestine and the Levant.	See Ezra iv. 2. (1. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.
675-671		Esar-haddon invades Arabia and Sinai, and besieges Tyre.	
670		Esar-haddon defeats Tihakah at Memphis and conquers Egypt.	
668-626		Assur-bani-pal ² , king of Assyria. Tihakah regains Egypt (668).	See Ezra iv. 2, 10; 2 Kings xvii. 24.
666		Manasseh and twenty-one other Syrian and Levantine princes tributary to Assur-bani-pal, who subdues Egypt.	
666-610		Psammetichus I, son of Necho I, king of Egypt (66th dynasty).	
663		Assur-bani-pal again invades Egypt, sacks Thebes, and takes 6621 Tyre and Arvad.	Nahum iii. 8-10.
652-649		Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, Lydia, Elam, and Babylon revolt from Assyria.	
648-645		Assur-bani-pal reduces Babylon and Elam, the Hauran, N. Arabia, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and Nabataea, and punishes Ussu 'by the sea' and Akko Ptolemais.	
641-630	Amon		2 Kings xvi. 18-20; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 20
641		Tyre assists Assur-bani-pal against Arvad.	25; Jer. i. 2.

c. 630	JEREMIAH	Scythians invade Media and Western Asia. Psammeticus destroys Ashdod after twenty-nine years' siege.	See Ezek. xxvii. 8, 11; Jer. i. 13; xxv. 20. Cf. Zeph. ii. 4; Jer. i. 1-3. Cf. xliii. 5-7; xlv. 1 (i. 4-19).
625	ZEPHANIAH	(?) Scythians invade Western Palestine	Jer. iv. 6 (?); Zeph. i. 7-9.
c. 625-539	PERIOD OF CHALDEAN ASCENDANCY.		
625-604		Nabopolassar, viceroy (625) and then king (c. 612) of Babylon.	Jer. xx. 4.
c. 624 (or 607?)	NAHUM.	(624) (Cyaxeres, king of Media, attacks Nineveh	Cf. Nah. i. 11, 13, 15.
621		Book of the Law (the greater part of Deuteronomy) discovered in the Temple. Josiah's reforms begin.	2 Kings xxii.—xxiii; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8, 14. (Deut. v.—xxvi, xxviii); (Jer. xi. 1-8).
610-594		Pharaoh Neco II, king of Egypt (26th dynasty)	2 Kings xviii. 21; xxiii.
608	Jehoahaz (three months)	Josiah defeated and slain by Neco at Megiddo. Jehoahaz taken to Egypt.	2 Kings xxiii. 29-35; Jer. xv. 9; xxii. 10-12.
608-597	Jehoiakim.		2 Kings xxiii. 34 (Jer. xi. 9—xx), (xxvi). (xxxv).
607		Nineveh falls to the Medes, &c. (under Cyaxeres) and Chaldeans (under Nabopolassar). End of the Assyrian empire ¹ .	Cf. Nah. ii. 13.
605		Nebuchadrezzar, as his father's general, defeats Neco at Carchemish.	2 Chron. xxxv. 20; Jer. xlv. 2. Cf. Hab. i. 5-11.
c. 605-600	IIABAKKUK (?)	Nebuchadrezzar ⁴ , king of Babylon, successor to his father Nabopolassar.	Cf. Hab. i. 5-11, 15f.
604-562		Judah, vassal to Babylon.	2 Kings xxiv. 2; xxv; Jer. xxv. 1, 2 (xxv), (xxxvi).
602-600		Judah, withholding tribute from Babylon, is invaded by Moab, Ammon, and Syria in alliance with Babylon.	2 Kings xxiv. 1.
599 (or 597)			2 Kings xxiv. 2; Jer. xli. 14; xxxv. 11.

¹ See Chron. Table in vol. i. note 1. ² Only a few dates in Israel's history can be fixed with absolute certainty. . . . Hence few tables of dates. . . . exactly agree.' E. L. Curtis, Hastings's *D.B.* i. 403. ³ To this king, who made a systematic collection of his country's writings, we owe the greater part of our knowledge of Babylonian and Assyrian history. His lion hunts, &c. are represented on a long series of sculptured slabs and slates in the British Museum. ⁴ Assyria proper became a province of Media, while Babylon and other dependencies formed, under Nabopolassar, the new Babylonian empire, which only lasted seventy years, ending in 539 B.C. ⁵ The British Museum contains a number of bricks and a bronze step of an ancient temple on which are found the name and titles of Nebuchadrezzar with an account of his temple building.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE FOR THE SECOND VOLUME *(continued)*

B.C.	PROPHETS AND KINGS OF JUDAH	GENERAL HISTORY	BIBLE REFERENCES
598	.	Jerusalem besieged by Nebuchadrezzar	2 Kings xiv. 10-16; Dan. i. 1; Jer. xli. 10-12.
597	Jehoiachin	Jehoiachin yields to Nebuchadrezzar. First great exile of the Jews to Babylon.	Jer. xli. 24-30; 2 Kings xiv. 6, 12-16; Jer. xlii. 18, 19; xlii. 10-12, 24; Ezek. i.
597-586	Zedekiah . .	Zedekiah, vassal of Babylon (597)	2 Kings xiv. 17, 18; 2 Chron. xvi. 10, 11; Jer. xxxvii. 1; lli. 1; xxvii. &c. (xxi-xxiv), (xxvii-xxix).
594-588 c. 594-570	EZEKIEL (in Chaldea)	Psammetichus II, king of Egypt (26th dynasty).	Ezek. i. 1.
593	.	Jewish revolt against Babylon resisted by Jeremiah	Jer. xxvii, xxviii.
589-564	.	Hophra (Apries), king of Egypt (26th dynasty)	Jer. xlv. 30; Ezek. xxix. 3, &c.
589	.	Hophra offers help to Zedekiah, who revolts from Babylon	Jer. xxvii. 5, 7, 11; xlv. 30; 2 Kings xxiv. 20; Jer. lii. 3.
586	.	Jerusalem taken by Nebuchadrezzar and destroyed. Second exile of Jews into Babylon. Flight of many Jews with Jeremiah into Egypt.	2 Kings xxv. 4-21; Jer. xxix. 1-14; xliii. 1-7; lli. 1-30; Ezek. xxiv. 2; xli. 12; 1 Chron. vi. 15; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6-13; Obad. 11 (Jer. xxx-xxxiv), (xxxvii-xxxix), (xl-xliv).
585	.	Battle of the Eclipse. Triple league, Babylon, Media, Lydia.	
564-526	.	Anasis II, king of Egypt (26th dynasty).	2 Kings xxv. 27-30; Jer. lii. 31-34.
561-559	.	Amel-marduk (Evil-merodach), king of Babylon, the liberator of Jehoiachin.	
559-555	OBADIAH (?)	Nergal-sharezer (Neuglissar), king of Babylon	Jer. xxxiv. 3.
555	.	Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon	See note on Dan. v. 1.

A GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS EITHER OBSCURE OR OBSOLETE

- Alarm**, 'To arms (It. *all'arme*),' a call from a trumpet or horn. Zeph. i. 16; Jer. iv. 19.
- Angle**, a fishing-rod or line with hook. Hab. i. 15.
- Apace**, at a quick pace (from *a*=on, at a pace). Jer. xlvi. 5.
- Array**, to put on as a raiment. Jer. xliii. 12.
- Astonied**, astonished, astounded. Jer. xiv. 9.
- Booties**, prey of war (rarely used in the plural). Hab. ii. 7.
- Bruit**, a rumour noised abroad. Nah. iii. 19.
- Cankerworm**, either a particular kind of locust, or a young locust before its wings have grown. Nah. iii. 15; Jer. li. 14.
- Cast about**, to turn. Jer. xli. 14.
- Chapt**, fissured or cracked as of parched ground. Jer. xiv. 4.
- Ciel**, to panel, wainscot; applied originally to any part of the room, not the ceiling only. Jer. xxii. 14.
- Clouts**, any piece of cloth or rag. Jer. xxxviii. 11, 12.
- Coast**, border (Fr. *côte*). Zeph. ii. 5.
- Consult**, to plan, purpose, contrive, devise. Hab. ii. 10; Mic. vi. 5; Ps. lxii. 4.
- Correct**, to punish for a fault, to place under discipline. Jer. x. 24.
- Day**, an appointed time. Zeph. i. 8, 14, &c.
- Delicate**, accustomed to luxury and refinement. Jer. vi. 2.
- Delicates**, delicacies, dainties. Jer. li. 34.
- Deputies**, military officers. Jer. li. 23, 28.
- Discover**, to strip off, lay bare. Nah. iii. 5; Jer. xliii. 22, 26.
- Dote**, to be feeble-minded, confounded. Jer. i. 36.
- Drag**, drag-net, drawn along the bottom of the water. Hab. i. 15, 16.
- Excellency**, pride, majesty, glory (see Glossary, vol. i, p. xlii, note). Nah. ii. 2.
- Fame**, report. Jer. vi. 24.
- Fenced**, fortified. Zeph. i. 16.
- Fray**, shortened form of affray, to drive or frighten away. Jer. vii. 33.
- Furniture**, equipment, vessels, &c. Nah. ii. 9.
- Gad**, to wander about. Jer. ii. 36.
- Governors**, military officers. Jer. li. 23, 28.
- Heap**, a ruin. The Heb. *Te'* has become a frequent prefix in the names of towns. Jer. xxx. 18; xlix. 2.
- Innocents**, innocent people: cf. Holy Innocents. Jer. xix. 4 (where see note).
- Lees**, that which *lies* at the bottom, sediment or dregs of a liquid. Zeph. i. 12; Jer. xlviii. 11.
- Light**, wanton or frivolous. Zeph. iii. 4 (where see note).
- Lightness**, frivolity, lewdness, wantonness. Jer. iii. 9.
- Like**, as equivalent to modern likely. Jer. xxxviii. 9.
- Mantelet**, siege-shelter, from mantle, a covering. Nah. ii. 5.
- Marshals**, military officers. Nah. iii. 17; Jer. li. 27.
- Meat**, food generally. Hab. i. 16; iii. 17.
- Munition**, fortification, stronghold. Nah. ii. 1.
- Post**, a courier using relays of mules, camels, &c. Jer. li. 31.
- Ravin**, prey of a wild animal. Nah. ii. 12.

GLOSSARY

Solemn, appointed, stated, fixed
(Lat. *solenus*). Zeph. iii. 18.
Sottish, foolish, infatuated (see
Milton's *Paradise Lost*. i. 473).
Jer. iv. 22.
Straitness, narrowness, so of close
confinement in a siege. Jer. xix. 9.
Tabering, drumming, beating as on
a drum. Nah. ii. 7.
Tell, count. Jer. xv. 2.

Vex, harass, or trouble (physically),
Hab. ii. 7.
Vile, of small account, common.
Nah. i. 14; iii. 6; Jer. xv. 19.
Wax, to grow, become. Jer. vi. 24.
Waymark, a mark to guide travellers.
Jer. xxxi. 21.
Well favoured, beautiful. Nah. iii. 4.
Worthies, men of rank or eminence.
Nah. ii. 5.

PASSAGES QUOTED OR REFERRED TO IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Hab. i. 5Acts xiii. 41
ii. 3-4Heb. x. 37-38
ii. 4Rom. i. 17
 Gal. iii. 11
Jer. vii. 11Mat. xxi. 13
 Mark xi. 17

Jer. vii. 11Luke xix. 46
ix. 23-241 Cor. i. 31
 Cf. 2 Cor. x. 17
xxxi. 15Mat. ii. 18
xxxi. 31-34 ...Heb. viii. 8-12
xxxi. 33-34 ...Heb. x. 16-17

ZEPHANIAH

INTRODUCTION

IN Zephaniah we have one who was in all probability a prince as well as a prophet. In the title he is said to have been the great-great-grandson of Hezekiah¹, and therefore a relation of Josiah. With Jeremiah he was very probably among those prophets who supported the young king at the time of his reformation (2 Kings xxiii. 2). Indeed, it is not unlikely that he may have had something to do with moulding the character of Jeremiah. As a prince his influence with the people would have been very great, and this supposition adds a special interest to his condemnation of the royal house for adopting foreign costume (i. 8).

That Zephaniah lived in Jerusalem is inferred from i. 4 (see note). In the first chapter of his prophecy we see almost as much of the Holy City as in the whole of either Isaiah or Jeremiah: 'the flat roofs with men and women bowing in the twilight to the host of heaven; the crowds of priests; the nobles and their foreign fashions; the Fish Gate; the New or *Second* Town, where the rich lived; the *Heights*, to which buildings had at last spread; and between them the hollow *Mortar*, with its markets, Phœnician merchants, and money-dealers²' (i. 4, 5, 8, 10, 11). From his allusions to the idolatry, injustice, and general corruption then prevalent (i. 3-6, 9-12; iii. 1-7), we gather that he probably wrote when the Holy City was still degraded by the horrible idolatrous practices which Manasseh had introduced. There can be little doubt, indeed, that the reforms of Josiah were in a large measure the result of Zephaniah's prophecy. Its date would therefore be c. 626 B.C.

This book has a special historical interest for us if, as is now coming to be generally believed, the prophet shared and made use of the alarm inspired by a great incursion of Scythians, a nomad Aryan race (with which the Anglo-Saxons are lineally connected), which had spread over the region between the Caucasus and the Caspian. In the seventh century this people broke away from their vast treeless steppes and threw the whole of civilised Asia into more or less confusion for twenty-eight years. Terrible stories were told of these swiftly moving, fair-headed Centaurs, who fought from the saddle with bow and arrows, and who drank the blood of their enemies in cups made out of their skulls. They also invaded

¹ That this was the king of Judah has been argued from the mention of four generations of ancestors, which is found in the case of no other prophet, and suggests that the editor wished to emphasise his descent from a well-known person.

² G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. ii, p. 48.

Palestine and Egypt, but their march was arrested by Psammeticus I (666-610 B.C.), the Egyptian king, while he was besieging Ashdod in Philistia. According to Herodotus, the historian to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of the events here mentioned (i. 74, 103-6; iv. 1), he induced them to return 'by gifts and entreaties'. It is not improbable that allusions are made to these incursions in Jer. iv. 3-vi. 30 and Ezek. xxxviii and xxxix. If it be true that Zephaniah had this inroad of the Scythians in his mind, we must admit that his anticipations were not fulfilled exactly in the way in which he had expected, and yet within forty years another instrument of Divine judgement had razed Jerusalem to the ground¹.

Zephaniah proclaims the imminence of the day of Jehovah and paints it in dark and gloomy colours. The judgement is pictured at one time as a sacrificial feast, of which the guests are already invited by Jehovah to partake; at another as the great and terrible day of God's wrath (see notes on i. 7, 15). But while judgement and subsequent blessing await, in the providence of God, the whole world, and more especially the region extending from Ethiopia in the far south to Nineveh in the north, the prophet has his own people mainly in mind. He is profoundly convinced that a severe punishment must overtake a people so socially corrupt as Judah; and yet he is confident that the treatment will be disciplinary. God's people, or the remnant which in the day of His wrath will be hid² (ii. 3), will be humbled and purified by it, and will thus become 'a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth' (iii. 20).

Zephaniah has borrowed many thoughts and phrases from earlier prophets, especially from Isaiah, and yet there is something distinctively characteristic both in the sustained outpouring of Divine wrath in the earlier part of the book and the complete contrast between this and the jubilant happiness of the restored remnant of Judah under their great king in iii. 8 ff. In its general effect the book might be compared with that of Isaiah taken as a whole. Whether in the case of Zephaniah it is entirely the work of a single author is certainly open to dispute. But there can be no doubt that this book as it stands in its completeness is a work of singular beauty and of high religious value. It does not speak, it is true, of a personal Messiah, as distinct from Jehovah, but it makes a large contribution towards that conception of the kingdom of God upon earth which is to be realised in the fulfilment of Christian hope and the development of Christian character.

¹ For some remarks on the principle on which the fulfilment of prophecy depended, see General Introduction, vol. i, pp. xviii, xxv-xxvii.

² The prophet's name means 'Jehovah hideth'. But a different Hebrew word is used in ii. 3.

ZEPHANIAH

The Superscription. i. 1.

1 THE word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah^a, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.

I. GOD IN JUDGEMENT. i. 2—iii. 7.

Universal and overwhelming destruction. i. 2—3.

2 I will utterly consume all things^b from off the face of the ground,

Saith the LORD.

3 I will consume man and beast ;
I will consume the fowls of the heaven,
And the fishes of the sea,
And the stumblingblocks^c with the wicked ;
And I will cut off man from off the face of the ground,

Saith the LORD.

The fate of the idolaters and apostates of Jerusalem.

i. 4—6.

4 And I will stretch out mine hand^d upon Judah,
And upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem ;
And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place^e,
And the name of the¹ Chemarim^f with the priests ;^{1 See}
5 And them that worship the host of heaven upon^{2 Kings}
the housetops^g ;^{xxiii. 5.}
And them that worship, which swear to the LORD^{Hos. x. 5. †}
and swear by² Malcam^h ;^{2 Or, their king}

N.B. An obelus (†) attached to a marginal note shews that the alternative rendering or reading is preferred, or calls attention to some other important point.

^a Probably the king of this name. See *Intro.*, p. 1.

^b Zephaniah, as many another prophet, sees God's judgement coming not on man only but on the world itself and all that is therein, as though tainted with man's iniquity. Cf. *Hos.* iv. 3 ; *Isa.* xiii. 9 ff ; *xxiv.* 1—6.

^c Meaning uncertain, but probably any idolatrous object. Cf. *Ezek.* vii. 19 ; *xiv.* 3, 4, 7 ; *xliv.* 12.

^d i. e. to smite (cf. *Isa.* v. 25, &c., where see note) : the judgement on all created things is concentrated on the chosen people. See *Amos* iii. 2.

^e Implying that the prophet was a resident in Jerusalem. See *Intro.*, p. 1.

^f The name of the Canaanitish priests. The omission of this word by LXX is no proof of its not being genuine, because in both the passages cited in margin they misunderstood the word, and may here have purposely omitted it.

^g This was probably introduced under Manasseh but was put down by Josiah, 621 B. C. See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 5 ; cf. *Job* xxxi. 26 ; *Ezek.* viii. 16 ; *Jer.* viii. 2 ; *xix.* 13.

^h Offering allegiance to both Jehovah and Molech. See *Ezek.* xxiii. 39.

And them that are turned back from following 6
the LORD;
And those that have not sought the LORD,
Nor inquired after him ^a.

Jehovah's sacrifice of princes and nobles. i. 7-8.

Hold thy peace ^b in the presence of the Lord God: 7
For the day ^c of the LORD is at hand:
For the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice,
He hath ¹ sanctified his guests ^d.
And it shall come to pass in the day of the 8
LORD'S sacrifice,
That I will ² punish the princes ^e, and the king's
sons ^f,
And all such as are clothed with foreign apparel ^g.

^a See
1 Sam. xvi.
5.

² Heb. *visit*
upon.

*How the enemy would wreak God's vengeance on the
plunderers, the merchants, and the easy-going sceptics.*
i. 9-13.

And in that day I will ² punish all those that leap 9
over the threshold ^h,
Which fill their master's house with violence
and deceit.

And in that day, saith the LORD, 10
There shall be the noise of a cry from the fish
gate ⁱ,
And an howling from the ³ second quarter,
And a great crashing from the hills.

³ Heb.
Mishneh.

^a Schmiedel points out that there is a gradual change from gross outward idolatry to refined inward apostasy: Baal-images, their priests, open worshippers on housetops, secret worshippers, apostates, indifferentists.

^b Cf. Hab. ii. 20; Zech. ii. 13.

^c See note on Amos v. 18.

^d Cf. Isa. xxxiv. 6. The figure is taken from the ancient sacrificial feast, which originally, in ordinary cases, included all parts of the animal except the inner fat. Cf. 1 Sam. ix. 12. Having already invited His guests (a trait added to make the simile more vivid) it is time to slaughter the victim. Cf. Matt. xxii. 4. By 'guests' the foes i. e. the Scythians who are to carry out God's wrath are probably referred to; or the 'guests' may refer to the birds and beasts invited by Jehovah to a sacrificial feast on the slain. Cf. Isa. xlii. 3; Ezek. xxxix. 17-20.

^e The nobles and judges.

^f The royal house. Cf. Jer. xxxvi. 26. It probably refers to the households of Manasseh and Amon.

^g Thus shewing their preference for countries other than their own. Cf. Ezek. xxiii. 12-15.

^h Probably a suggestion of the violent and treacherous entry into a house by retainers to plunder for their master's benefit.

ⁱ Near the fish-market, in the northern wall. Cf. Neh. iii. 3; xii. 39. See Introd., p. 1.

- 11 Howl, ye inhabitants of ¹ Maktesh ^a,
 For all ² the people of Canaan are undone :
 All they that were laden with silver are cut off ^b.
¹ Or, *The mortar*
² Or, *the merchant people*
- 12 And it shall come to pass at that time,
 That I will search Jerusalem with ³ candles ^c;
 And I will ⁴ punish the men that are ⁵ settled
 on their lees ^d,
 That say in their heart, The LORD will not
 do good,
 Neither will he do evil ^e.
³ Heb. *lamps.* +
⁴ Heb. *visit upon.*
⁵ Or, *thickened* +
- 13 And their wealth shall become a spoil,
 And their houses a desolation :
 Yea, they shall build houses,
 But shall not inhabit them ;
 And they shall plant vineyards,
 But shall not drink the wine thereof ^f.
- The Day of Jehovah's wrath. i. 14-18.*
- 14 The great day of the LORD is near,
 It is near and hasteth greatly,
Even the voice ^g of the day of the LORD ;
 The mighty man crieth there bitterly ^h.
- 15 That day is a day of wrath ⁱ,
 A day of trouble and distress,
 A day of wasteness and desolation,
 A day of darkness and gloominess,
 A day of clouds and thick darkness,
- 16 A day of the trumpet and alarm ^k,
 Against the fenced cities,
 And against the high ⁶ battlements.
⁶ Or, *corner towers*

^a Perhaps the upper part of the Tyropean valley, which divided Zion and Moriah from the upper city. There is possibly an allusion to the shouts of the Tyrian traders here as the noise of pounding in a mortar. See *Encycl. Bibl.*, ii. 2422.

^b An allusion to the Phœnicians, laden either with their gains or money to purchase them. ^c The darkest corners will be investigated by the foe.

^d Wine left upon its sediment too long thickened, and so was spoiled. 'To thicken upon one's lees became a proverb for sloth, indifference, and the muddy mind' (G. A. Smith). Cf. Jer. xlviii. 11, 12.

^e That is to say, there is no god at all. Cf. Isa. xli. 23, where the same thing is said of the Babylonian idols.

^f Cf. Amos v. 11 ; Mic. vi. 15 ; Deut. xxviii. 30, 39.

^g Better, 'Hark! the day of Jehovah!' Cf. Isa. xl. 3.

^h The warrior (see Nah. ii. 3) is in despair.

ⁱ The Vulgate has *Dies irae, dies illa*, which became the first line of Thomas of Celano's noble Advent hymn, 'Day of wrath.'

^k i. e. 'a call to arms'. The Hebrew word, which means a vibrating sound, may be used of a loud cry (whether of joy, 1 Sam. iv. 5, or a battle cry, Amos i. 14), or a trumpet call, as in Num. x. 5, 6 ; Jer. iv. 19. See Glossary.

And I will bring distress upon men,
That they shall walk like blind men ^a,
Because they have sinned against the LORD:
And their blood shall be poured out as dust ^b,
And their flesh as dung.

17

Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to ¹⁸
deliver them

In the day of the LORD's wrath;
But the whole land shall be devoured
By the fire of his jealousy ^c:

¹ Or, *speedy*

For he shall make an end, yea, a ¹ terrible end,
Of all them that dwell in the land.

The nation is exhorted to timely repentance. ii. 1-2.

Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, **2**

² Or, *long-
ing*

O nation that hath no ² shamed ^d;

Before the decree bring forth ^e, **2**

³ Or, *(The
day passeth
as the chaff,)*

³ Before the day pass as the chaff,

Before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon
you,

Before the day of the LORD's anger come upon
you.

*Salvation will await the perseverance of the
righteous. ii. 3.*

Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, **3**

Which have wrought his judgement;

Seek righteousness, seek meekness:

It may be ye shall be hid ^f

In the day of the LORD's anger.

^a In their terror they will not know where to turn.

^b Of as little value and in as great a quantity, Gen. xiii. 16; 2 Kings xiii. 7.

^c Cf. iii. 8. God's jealousy is aroused by the dishonour which men do Him by their idolatry.

^d The meaning is obscure. The text might possibly mean 'assemble yourselves to propitiate God's anger'. Driver, however, following Grätz, Cheyne, and Budde, by a very slight change reads: 'Get you shame, and be ye ashamed, O nation unabashed,' i. e. by God's threats.

^e i. e. before God's judgement takes effect. But Wellhausen restores, on the basis of LXX, what is perhaps the true text of the first two lines, 'Before ye become as chaff that passeth away.' Cf. Ps. i. 4.

^f The figure here is 'that of finding refuge from a storm passing over, or a foe sweeping past. Isa. xxvi. 20; Job xiv. 13' (Davidson). The prophet hopes that by repentance they may escape the fate that was falling upon all nations. See next section.

GOD'S JUDGEMENT UPON NEIGHBOURING
NATIONS. ii. 4-15.

(1) *Philistia*. ii. 4-7.

- 4 For^a Gaza shall be forsaken,
And Ashkelon a desolation^b :
They shall drive out Ashdod at the noonday,
And Ekron shall be rooted up.
- 5 Woe unto the inhabitants of¹ the sea coast, ¹ Or, *the region of the sea*
The nation of the Cherethites^c !
The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan,
The land of the Philistines ;
I will destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.
- 6 And the sea coast shall be pastures,
With² cottages^d for shepherds ² Or, *caves*
And folds for flocks.
- 7 And the coast shall be for the remnant^e of the
house of Judah ;
They shall feed *their flocks* thereupon :
In the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in
the evening ;
For the LORD their God shall visit them,
And bring again their captivity.

(2) *Moab and Ammon*. ii. 8-11.

- 8 I have heard the reproach of Moab,
And the revilings of the children of Ammon,
Wherewith they have reproached^f my people,
And magnified themselves against their border.

^a For the connexion between this and the previous section, see note on ver. 3.

^b There is assonance here in some of the names of towns and their punishments ; e. g. 'Azza, 'Azuvah, 'Ekron te'aker. Gath is omitted, as it is in Jer. xlvii ; Amos i. 6-8 ; Zech. ix. 5-7, because it was totally destroyed about 750 B. C.

^c Practically Philistines, a word pointing probably to their Cretan origin. See Ezek. xxv. 16, and notes on Amos ix. 7 and Jer. xlvii. 7.

^d The word is obscure. Hitzig suggests the rendering 'shall be for meadows of pastures for shepherds, &c.' The idea is, of course, that of depopulation, sheep and shepherds being typical of a land almost deserted. Cf. Isa. xvii. 2 and ver. 14.

^e 'The ideal of the final security of a poor and lowly remnant of Israel necessarily implies that they shall no longer be threatened by hostility from without, and this condition is satisfied by the prophet's view of the impending judgement on the ancient enemies of his nation' (Robertson Smith). It would appear, however, that Zephaniah, with an inconsistency not uncommon in Hebrew prophecy, at times thinks of God's past or future judgements on the nations which take place *before* the Jewish catastrophe, and from which the Jews might have taken warning ; sometimes, as here, of those that would *follow* the Exile which he contemplated. Some scholars, however, on the grounds already suggested in this note, question the genuineness of this verse.

^f Cf. Isa. xvi. 6 ; xxv. 11 ; Jer. xlviii. 26-30, 42 ; Ezek. xxv. 3, 6, 8.

Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,

Surely Moab shall be as Sodom,

And the children of Ammon as Gomorrah,

¹ Or, *wild
vetches*

• A possession of ¹ nettles^a, and saltpits,

And a perpetual desolation^b :

The residue of my people shall spoil them,

And the remnant of my nation shall inherit them.

This shall they have for their pride,

10

Because they have reproached and magnified themselves

Against the people of the LORD of hosts.

• The LORD will be terrible unto them :

11

For he will famish^d all the gods of the earth :

And men shall worship him, every one from his place,

Even all the ² isles of the nations.

† ² Or,
coastlands

(3) *Ethiopia and Assyria.* ii. 12-15.

Ye Ethiopians^e also, ye shall be slain by my sword. 12

And he will stretch out his hand against the north^f, 13

And destroy Assyria ;

And will make Nineveh a desolation,

And dry like the wilderness.

And herds shall lie down in the midst of her,

14

³ All the beasts of the nations^g :

† ³ Or, *All
beasts of
every kind*

Both the pelican and the porcupine^h shall lodge in the chapitersⁱ thereof :

Their voice shall sing in the windows^k ;

^a An unidentified weed, as in Job xxx. 7.

^b The southern shores of the Dead Sea are evidently in the prophet's mind.

^c The thought of judgement is extended parenthetically to all the enemies of Jehovah, with the final result that they desert their idols and turn to worship Him. Some scholars believe this verse to be a later insertion.

^d Lit. 'make lean', i. e. by drawing men away from them, and thus depriving them of sacrifice, and therefore, of course, the worshippers of their help.

^e 'Taken as an example of a distant (Isa. xi. 11) and also famous (Isa. xviii. 1, 2) nation upon which Yahveh's judgement will alight' Driver.

^f Assyria was really to the NE., but it always invaded Palestine from the north, because the Euphrates was forded at Carchemish.

^g Lit. 'All the beasts of nation'. See margin and cf. Joel i. 6, where 'nation' is used of locusts.

^h Cf. Isa. xxxiv. 11.

ⁱ i. e. capitals of the pillars, as in Amos ix. 1.

^k 'In the midst of the desolation, the muteness of the hedgehog, and the pensive loneliness of the solitary pelican, the musing spectator is startled by the glad strain of some songbird, unconscious that it is sitting in the windows of those at whose name the world grew pale' (Pusey).

¹ Desolation shall be in the thresholds :
For he hath laid bare the cedar work.

¹ Or,
Drought

- 15 This is the joyous city ^a that dwelt carelessly,
That said in her heart,
I am, and there is none else beside me ^b :
How is she become a desolation,
A place for beasts to lie down in ^c !
Every one that passeth by her shall hiss ^d,
And wag his hand ^e.

*Judgement must fall on guilty Jerusalem, who would not
take warning by the fate of these nations. iii. 1-7.*

- 3 Woe to her that is rebellious ^f and polluted,
To the oppressing city !

- 2 She obeyed not the voice ;
She received not ² correction ;
She trusted not in the LORD ;
She drew not near to her God.

² Or, in-
struction †

- 3 Her princes ^g in the midst of her are roaring lions ;
Her judges are evening wolves ;
They ^h leave nothing till the morrow.

- 4 Her prophets are light ⁱ and treacherous persons ^k :
Her priests have profaned the sanctuary,
They have done violence to the law.

^h Or, gnaw
not the
bones on the
morrow †

- 5 The LORD in the midst of her is righteous ;
He will not do iniquity ;

⁴ Every morning doth he bring his judgement to ⁴ Heb.
light, Morning
by morn-
ing.

He faileth not ;
But the unjust knoweth no shame.

- 6 I have cut off nations,
Their ⁵ battlements are desolate ;
I have made their streets waste,
That none passeth by :
Their cities are destroyed,
So that there is no man,
That there is none inhabitant.

⁵ Or, corner
towers

^a Cf. Isa. xxiii. 7.

^b Cf. Isa. xlvii. 8.

^c Cf. Isa. xvii. 2.

^d Cf. Jer. l. 13.

^e Cf. Nah. iii. 19 ; Job xxvii. 23.

^f She rebelled against Jehovah, and the rich oppressed the poor.

^g See note on i. 8.

^h So Versions, but without support from Hebrew usage. See margin. Like
wolves they devour everything the night before, and in the morning have not
even the bones left to gnaw.

ⁱ i. e. vainly boasting. Cf. Jer. xxiii. 32.

^k Men at the very least disloyal to God.

† ¹ Or, *in-*
struction

• Or, *How-*
soever I
punished
her

I said, Surely thou wilt fear me,
Thou wilt receive ¹ correction ;
So her dwelling should not be cut off,
² *According to* all that I have appointed concerning
her ^a :
But they rose early and corrupted all their doings.

II. GOD IN MERCY. iii. 8-20.

*The nations purified by chastisement would work for
Jehovah and restore His exiled people.* iii. 8-10.

Therefore ^b wait ye for me, saith the LORD, 8
Until the day that I rise up to the prey :
For my ³ determination is to gather the nations,
That I may assemble the kingdoms,
To pour upon them mine indignation,
Even all my fierce anger ;
For all the earth shall be devoured
With the fire of my jealousy.

^a Heb.
judgement.

† Heb. *lip.*

For then ^c will I turn to the peoples a pure ⁴ lan-
guage ^d,

That they may all call upon the name of the LORD,

† Heb.
shoulder.

To serve him with one ⁵ consent ^e.

† ^e Or, *shall*
they bring
my suppli-
ants, even
the daugh-
ter of my
dispersed,
for an offer-
ing unto
me

From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia ⁶ my suppliants, 10
Even the daughter of my dispersed,
Shall bring mine offering.

*The remnant, purified of the wicked, would lead a
righteous and peaceful life in Jerusalem.* iii. 11-13.

In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy 11
doings,

Wherein thou hast transgressed against me :

^a It was God's purpose that she should not be cut off, but her sins were defeating that purpose. The meaning, however, is very uncertain.

^b Because of God's purpose. The prophet's first thought is the salvation of his people by the destruction of their enemies. This gives way immediately to the larger view that all nations will be included in God's mercy. If, however, as by some scholars, we regard ver. 9-10 as a later post-exilic addition, the connexion of thought is much simpler.

^c When the nations have been purified by chastisement. But see note on previous verse.

^d With purified lips (see marg.) shall they call upon God. Cf. Isa. vi. 5, 7 ; Hos. ii. 16, 17 ; xiv. 2 ; Ps. xvi. 4.

^e As we should say, 'shoulder to shoulder.'

For then I will take away out of the midst of thee

¹thy proudly exulting ones^a,
And thou shalt no more be haughty
In my holy mountain^b.

¹ Or, *them*
that exult
in thy
majesty.

12 But I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and
poor people,

And they shall trust in the name of the LORD.

13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor
speak lies;
Neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their
mouth:

For they shall feed and lie down,
And none shall make them afraid^c.

The joy of the redeemed in the presence of Jehovah.

iii. 14-17.

14 ^dSing, O daughter of Zion;
Shout, O Israel;

Be glad and rejoice with all the heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem.

15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgements^e,
He hath cast out thine enemy:
The king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the
midst of thee:

Thou shalt not ²fear evil any more.

² Another
reading is,
see

16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou
not:

³O Zion, let not thine hands be slack.

³ Or, And to
Zion

17 The LORD thy God is in the midst of thee,
A mighty one who will save:

He will rejoice over thee with joy,

He will ⁴rest in his love^f,

⁴ Heb. *be*
silent. †

He will joy over thee with singing.

^a Cf. Isa. xiii. 3.

^b Here of Jerusalem, as in the Deutero-Isaiah (lvii. 13); Isaiah uses it of the whole country (xi. 9).

^c Cf. Mic. iv. 4.

^d Many modern scholars think that verses 14-20 were added at the end of the Babylonian Exile or after the Return to Judah. In its tone, and to some extent in its style, it resembles the Deutero-Isaiah.

^e i. e. punishments.

^f 'As a man caresses his dearest wife, so will God then quietly repose in thy love' (Calvin). But Buhl, quoted by Driver, following LXX renders, 'He will renew His love.' The Hebrew word (as in margin) is usually explained of being silent in respect of Israel's sins. God forgives them out of His great love.

*A general restoration of the dispersed people, and their
favour among the nations of the world. iii. 18-20.*

¹ Or, *They
have been
sorrowful
for the
solemn
assembly
which I took
away from
thee, for the
lifting up
of reproach
against her*

² Or, *are
removed
from*

³ Or, *Which
has borne
the burden
of reproach*

¹ According
to some
ancient
authorities,
thee.

¹ I will gather them that ² sorrow for the solemn ¹⁸
assembly, who were of thee :

³ *To whom* the burden upon ⁴ her was a reproach ^a.

Behold, at that time I will deal with all them that ¹⁹
afflict thee :

And I will save her that halteth,

And gather her that was driven away ;

And I will make them a praise and a name,

Whose shame hath been in all the earth ^b.

At that time will I bring you in,

20

And at that time will I gather you :

For I will make you a name and a praise

Among all the peoples of the earth,

When I bring again your captivity before your eyes ^c,

Saith the LORD.

^a This verse is very obscure, and the text is almost certainly corrupt: as rendered in text and margin it refers to those who had been cut off by distance from the appointed feasts.

^b i. e. who in exile had endured the scorn of all the world. Cf. Mic. iv. 6, 7.

^c They themselves would see without any doubt that it was the work of God. Cf. Ps. liii. 6; cxxvi. 1, 2.

NAHUM

INTRODUCTION

THAT he was 'Nahum the Elkoshite' is all that is known of the author of this very vigorous and forcible book. We cannot even be certain as to the position of Elkosh¹, but it was probably in the kingdom of Judah. Nahum's prophecy must have been written either entirely or for the most part subsequently to Assur-bani-pal's capture of Thebes in Upper Egypt (663 B. C., Nah. iii. 8), and probably not very long before Nineveh was destroyed (607 B. C.).

Assyria², one of the three countries occupying the great Mesopotamian plain, was originally a colony in the north of the old Babylonian empire. Both the Babylonians and the Assyrians came of one Semitic stock, but about the seventeenth century B. C. the Assyrians asserted their independence. By the beginning of the thirteenth century B. C. they had become the ruling power, and eventually conquered the whole of Western Asia, including Media and Persia. They have therefore well been called the Romans of the East, although their brutality³ found no parallel in their European successors. Nineveh, whose foundation goes back into obscurity, in course of time took the place of Asshur as their capital,

¹ S. Jerome (fourth century A. D.) seems to have identified it with the modern Elkozeh in Upper Galilee. A mediaeval tradition, but dating only from the sixteenth century, points to Alkush in Assyria (two days' journey north of Mosul, near ancient Nineveh), where Nahum's supposed tomb is shewn. But it is difficult to see why, if Nahum belonged to the northern kingdom (whether living there after the deportation of the ten tribes or at the place of their exile), he should have shewn greater interest in Judah. This objection is supported by a tradition contained in 'The Lives of the Prophets' (a work formerly ascribed to Epiphanius), according to which the position of Elkosh was between Eleutheropolis and Gaza.

² Heb. Asshur. The name seems originally to have been given to the ancient capital, and thence to their national god, who was regarded as directing their wars and barbarous cruelties.

³ See Nah. iii. 1. 'We see on his bas-reliefs', so writes Rawlinson of Assur-bani-pal with reference to Layard's researches at Nineveh, 'the unresisting enemy thrust through with the spear, the tongue torn from the mouth of the captive accused of blasphemy, the rebel king beheaded on the field of battle, and the prisoner brought to execution with the head of a friend or brother hung round his neck . . . we behold the operation of flaying performed either upon living or dead men; we observe those who are about to be executed first struck on the face by the executioner's fist.'—*Ancient Monarchies*, II, ch. ix.

and under a succession of renowned kings¹ became a famous centre of commercial and religious life (see note on iii. 16). It consists of a principal city of about 1,800 acres, and inclosed within high walls, of which the ruins still remain, possibly also a larger circuit of some 60 miles in circumference, including the towns of Calah, Khorsabad, and others (see notes on Jonah iii. 4; iv. 11). It was only in 1842 that the site of Nineveh was discovered, but since then the palaces of Sennacherib and Esar-haddon and others have been excavated, and there have been found a number of colossal winged bulls and human-headed lions, sculptured slabs of alabaster panelling the rooms, and cylinders and bricks with cuneiform inscriptions, and many of these have been placed in the British Museum and in other collections. These serve to indicate the wealth, culture, and magnificence of Nineveh (cf. ii. 9). The walls were, according to Diodorus Siculus, 100 feet high², and so broad that three chariots could pass each other upon them. The city was further protected partly by the rivers Tigris and Khusar, and partly by broad moats. Hanging gardens, as at Babylon, were filled with rich plants and rare animals, and served, with temples and palaces, libraries and arsenals, to adorn and enrich the city.

This was the splendid city whose destruction Nahum so vividly foresees. After the death of Assur-bani-pal in 626 B. C., the empire rapidly declined, and soon became a seething mass of rebellion. Its hold over the western provinces was greatly relaxed, while the Assyrian policy of transportation, by which whole populations were made to change places, accelerated the revolt. The Medes having rebelled, Nabopolassar, viceroy of Babylon, was ordered to quell the rebellion. This he succeeded in accomplishing, and as a reward was entitled King of Babylon. But before many years he became the leader of a confederation against Assyria. For two years Nineveh was besieged, and then its fall was unexpectedly sudden. According to Diodorus Siculus, who borrowed from Ctesias, it was brought to an end by a sudden rise of the Tigris, which swept away a great part of the walls (see note on ii. 6). He goes on to relate that the king, seeing in the catastrophe the fulfilment of an oracle, gathered his harem and treasures into his palace, set the whole ablaze, and perished in the flames. The enemy then entered the city unopposed and destroyed it with fire.

Nineveh disappeared totally, and at once, so that in less than 300 years Alexander the Great marched over its site, 'not knowing that a world-empire, like that which he gave his life to found, was

¹ Especially Tiglath-Pileser I, Assur-nasir-pal, Shalmaneser II, Tiglath-Pileser III (the Pul of 2 Kings xv. 19), Sargon, Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and Assur-bani-pal.

² The actual height of this ruin is in some parts even now 46 feet.

buried under his feet' (Pusey). The city lay hidden under the mounds of its own ruins until the middle of the nineteenth century, when disinterred fragments bore traces of the final conflagration.

To appreciate rightly Nahum's spirited prophecy it must be borne in mind how intense would be the relief at the overthrow of that insolently oppressive power which had so long been the savage scourge of Western Asia, had devastated Israel, and had more than once laid siege to Jerusalem. The prophet expresses not merely the feelings of his own nation, but the exultation of an outraged humanity that the old lion is at last brought to bay. Nahum may be less spiritual¹ than most of the prophets, but 'the peculiarly pathetic element in this book,' says Ewald, 'is the way in which the evident danger of Nineveh is viewed in its relation to eternal truths.' The prophet bears forcible witness to that Divine righteousness which governs the course of the world's history. His stately description of the Divine character at the opening of his book² will bear comparison with some of the noblest utterances of prophetic literature. 'In dignity and force,' says Dr. Driver, 'Nahum approaches most nearly to Isaiah.' The descriptions of the siege and attack are clear, animated, and boldly impressive, and reveal the powerful imagination of the prophet. 'His rhythm rumbles and rolls, leaps and flashes,' says G. A. Smith³, 'like the horsemen and chariots which he describes.' His main religious theme is to shew how an empire founded on violence and wrong is overthrown, while security and peace are assured to the people of God.

¹ The omission of any allusion to the sins of his own people, and of any call to repentance, so characteristic of the other prophets, is certainly remarkable.

² On the genuineness of this passage, see note on ver. 2.

³ *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. ii, p. 91.

NAHUM

A twofold Superscription. i. 1.

†¹ Or,
oracle con-
cerning

THE ¹burden of Nineveh.

1

The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite ^a.

I. JEHOVAH TAKES VENGEANCE ON HIS
ENEMIES, BUT DELIVERS THOSE WHO
TRUST IN HIM. i. 2-15.

(1) *SOME OF THE GREAT ATTRIBUTES OF
JEHOVAH. i. 2-7.*

His wrath. i. 2-3 a.

^b The LORD is a jealous God and avengeth ; 2
The LORD avengeth and is full of wrath ;
The LORD taketh vengeance on his adversaries,
And he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies.
The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, 3
And will by no means clear *the guilty* ^c :

His power as seen in storm and earthquake. i. 3 b-6.

The LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in
the storm,
And the clouds are the dust of his feet ^d.
He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry ^e, 4
And drieth up all the rivers ^e :
Bashan languisheth, and Carmel,
And the flower of Lebanon languisheth ^f.
The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt ^g ; 5
And the earth is upheaved ^h at his presence,
Yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

N.B. An obelus (†) attached to a marginal note shows that the alternative rendering or reading is preferred, or calls attention to some other important point.

^a See Introduction, p. 13.

^b As the earlier part of this chapter shews signs of having been *originally* an acrostic, though like Pss. ix-x now much changed by reconstruction, a large number of critics believe that a later editor has, in 2-9 or 2-10, incorporated part of an acrostic psalm to supply, it may be, a beginning which had been lost. But it is also quite possible that Nahum himself incorporated an older psalm of this sort. The original acrostic of Pss. ix-x appears to be ancient, and a prophet is far more likely to have treated an ancient psalm in this way than an editor.

^c Cf. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, which, however, speaks first of God's mercy ; and Num. xiv. 17, 18.

^d They are small and contemptible in comparison with God. Cf. Isa. xl. 15 ; Amos ii. 7.

^e Possibly an allusion to the Red Sea and the Jordan. Cf. Hab. iii. 6-10, 15.

^f Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon were distinguished for their forests and flowers.

Cf. Isa. ii. 13 ; xxxiii. 9 ; Hos. xiv. 5, 6.

^g Cf. Mic. i. 3, 4, where see note.

^h Cf. Amos ix. 5 ; Ps. lxxviii. 8.

- 6 Who can stand before his indignation?
And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger^a?
His fury is poured out like fire,
And the rocks are broken asunder by him.

His defence of the faithful. i. 7.

- 7 The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of
trouble;
And he knoweth^b them that put their trust in
him.

(2) *HOW THESE ATTRIBUTES WOULD BE MANI-
FESTED IN THE DESTRUCTION OF ASSYRIA.*
i. 8-15.

The complete overthrow of Judah's great enemy. i. 8-12 a.

- 8 But with an overrunning flood he will make a
full end of the place thereof^c,
And will pursue his enemies into darkness.
- 9 What do ye imagine against the LORD?
He will make a full end:
Affliction shall not rise up the second time^d.
- 10 For though they be like tangled thorns,
And be drenched as it were in their drink,
They shall be devoured^e utterly as dry stubble^e. <sup>1 Or, as
stubble
fully dry</sup>
- 11 There is one gone forth out of thee^f,
That imagineth evil against the LORD,
^{2 That counselleth³ wickedness.} <sup>2 Or, A
wicked
counsellor</sup>
- 12 Thus saith the LORD:
Though they be in full strength,
And likewise many,
Even so shall they be cut down,
And he shall pass away. <sup>3 Or, worth-
lessness
Heb. Belial.</sup>

The deliverance of Judah. i. 12 b-13.

- ⁴ Though I have afflicted thee,
I will afflict thee no more^g.

<sup>4 Or, So
will I afflict
thee, that I
shall afflict,
&c.†</sup>

^a Cf. Mal. iii. 2. In the two following lines there seems to be a reference to the lightning and the wind. Cf. 1 Kings xix. 11, 12. ^b Cf. Hos. xiii. 5.

^c i. e. Nineveh. Cf. ii. 6, where see note.

^d Once will be sufficient. Cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 8.

^e Better in the American R.V.: 'For entangled like thorns and drunken as with their drink they are [perhaps better, shall be] consumed.' Nineveh may present itself as a twisted thorn hedge saturated with water, and so be thought unassailable, but God's fire will burn it as dry stubble. There is probably a sarcastic allusion to Assyrian intemperance.

^f i. e. Nineveh.

^g The Hebrew text is probably corrupt. The words as they stand must be referred to Jerusalem. The marginal rendering means 'I will very soon afflict thee no more'.

And now will I break his yoke from off thee, 13
And will burst thy bonds in sunder.

*The ruin of Nineveh's king and his idols will be
final. i. 14.*

And the LORD hath given commandment concerning 14
thee^a,

That no more of thy name be sown :
Out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the
graven image and the molten image ;
I will make thy grave ; for thou art vile.

Judah's delight at the joyful tidings. i. 15.

(Ch. i. 1
in Heb.)

Behold, upon the mountains the feet of him that 15
bringeth good tidings,

That publisheth peace^b !

Keep thy feasts, O Judah,

Perform thy vows :

¹ Or, the
man of
worthless-
ness
Heb. *Belial*.

For ¹ the wicked one shall no more pass through
thee ;

He is utterly cut off.

II. THE FIRST ODE ON NINEVEH'S DOOM.

ii. 1-13.

*An ironical invitation to Nineveh to resist the
approaching foe. ii. 1.*

He that dasheth in pieces^c is come up before thy 2
face :

Keep the munition^d,

Watch the way,

Make thy loins strong,

Fortify thy power mightily.

The meaning and purpose of Nineveh's destruction. ii. 2.

For the LORD bringeth again the ^eexcellency of 2
Jacob,

As the excellency of Israel^f :

^a Here masculine, referring to the king. In the last section, where it referred to Jerusalem, it was feminine.

^b Messengers hasten over the mountains to proclaim the good news that Nineveh is fallen, and Judah is bidden, without hindrance from the enemy, to offer thanksgivings to God. Isa. lii. 7 is probably adapted from this passage.

^c i. e. the spoiler of Nineveh.

^d i. e. guard the fortress. The directions are addressed to those within the city.

^e i. e. pre-eminence. See Glossary, vol. i, p. xxxii.

^f Jacob is probably here used, as often, of Judah, Israel of the Northern Kingdom, the meaning being that Jehovah would restore both to their former glorious state. Probably this verse is either a marginal gloss of some copyist

For the emptiers^a have emptied them out,
And marred their vine branches.

*The besieging force with steel-mounted chariots fight
without the walls. ii. 3.*

- 3 The shield of his mighty men is made red^b,
The valiant men are in scarlet^c:
The chariots¹ flash with steel^d in the day of¹ Heb. are
his preparation, with fire of
And the² spears are shaken terribly^e. steel.
2 Heb. fir
trees.

Hasty and confused preparations for defence. ii. 4-5 a.

- 4 The chariots rage in the streets,
They jostle one against another in the broad ways:
The appearance of them is like torches,
They run like the lightnings.
5 He remembereth his worthies^f:
They stumble^g in their march;

The speed and determination of the foe. ii. 5 b.

They make haste to the wall thereof,
And the mantelet^h is prepared.

The city is overwhelmed by a sudden catastrophe. ii. 6-7.

- 6 The gates of the rivers are openedⁱ,
And the palace is dissolved^k.
7³ And Huzzab^l is uncovered,
She is carried away,

³ Or, And
it is decreed;
she is un-
covered &c.

which was ultimately incorporated in the text, or its position has been shifted from the end of ch. i.

^a i. e. plunderers. Cf. Jer. v. 17; li. 2. The idea is that of a vine (Ps. lxxx. 9) being ruthlessly cut or trampled upon.

^b They may have been dyed red; or the reference is perhaps to the copper shields flashing in the sunlight. Cf. 1 Macc. vi. 39.

^c Uniforms were often red in those days. Cf. Ezek. xxiii. 14.

^d The meaning is uncertain. It may refer to the glittering steel plates with which the chariots were protected.

^e Either the brandishing of hand-lances or the swinging of battering-rams against the walls.

^f i. e. his valiant men, or military commanders. ^g Through fear or haste.

^h A movable screen or siege-tower to protect the besiegers.

ⁱ This either means that sluices are opened to let the water in or that, as in the siege of Babylon, the water having been diverted, the enemy break down and enter by the gates leading from the town to the river or channels. See Intro., p. 14 and ch. i. 8.

^k Probably a figure for the destruction of the inmates of the palace.

^l According to some ancient Rabbinical authorities, the name of the Assyrian queen; but the form is unlike a feminine proper name. Perhaps Gesenius is right in translating 'and will flow away' and connecting it with the previous verse. In this case we must go on to translate 'she is uncovered', &c., referring

¹ Or, *lead*
her

And her handmaids ¹ mourn as with the voice of doves ^a,

² Heb.
hearts.

Tabering ^b upon their ² breasts.

Flight of the inhabitants and looting of the wasted city.

ii. 8-10.

[†] ² Or,
from the
days that
she hath
been

But Nineveh hath been ³ from of old ^c like a pool of 8
water :

Yet ^d they flee away ;

Stand, stand, *they cry* ;

¹ Or,
causeth
them to
turn

But none ⁴ looketh back ^e.

Take ye the spoil of silver,

9

Take the spoil of gold :

For there is none end of the store,

Or, *wealth*

The ⁵ glory of all pleasant furniture ^f.

She is empty, and void, and waste ^g :

10

And the heart melteth,

And the knees smite together,

And anguish is in all loins,

And the faces of them all are waxed pale.

Nineveh is taunted for her pride and cruelty. ii. 11-12.

Where is the den of the lions,

11

And the feeding place of the young lions,

⁶ Or, even
the old lion

Where the lion ⁶ *and* the lioness walked,

The lion's whelp, and none made them afraid ?

The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, 12

And strangled for his lionesses,

And filled his caves with prey,

And his dens with ravin.

It is God who crushes her. ii. 13.

Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, 13

And I will burn her chariots in the smoke,

the words to the city personified. From the reference, however, to handmaids it is more probable that Huzzab is a textual corruption of some proper name. The marginal reading is, on poetical grounds, not to be thought of.

^a Cf. Isa. xxxviii. 14; lix. 11; Ezek. vii. 16.

^b i. e. drumming, or beating. The English word only occurs here, and the Hebrew only again in Ps. lxxviii. 25.

^c Assyria was now an empire of seven centuries standing. Nineveh's vast population, drawn from all quarters, is compared to a mass of waters; these pour forth and desert her. Cf. iii. 15, 16. ^d Although there are so many.

^e The attempt to arrest the flight is vain.

^f In the Assyrian inscriptions there is frequent allusion to Nineveh's costly treasures.

^g There is an assonance in the Hebrew: *būḳāh ūmēvūḳāh ūmēvullāḳāh*. The three words are practically synonymous, but their increasing length suggests a climax of desolation.

And the sword shall devour thy young lions :
 And I will cut off thy prey^a from the earth,
 And the voice of thy messengers^b shall no more
 be heard.

III. A SECOND ODE ON NINEVEH'S DOOM. iii.

The terrors of the siege of the city of blood and lies. iii. 1-3.

- 3 Woe to the bloody city !
 It is all full of lies and rapine ;
 The prey departeth not^c.
 2 The noise of the whip,
 And the noise of the rattling of wheels ;
 And prancing horses,
 And jumping chariots ;
 3 The horseman¹ mounting,
 And the flashing sword,
 And the glittering spear ;
 And a multitude of slain,
 And a great heap of carcases :
 And there is none end of the corpses ;
 They stumble upon their corpses^d.

¹ Or,
charging

*Because of her unprincipled intrigues Nineveh is exposed
 to the gibes of the nations which she has oppressed. iii. 4-7.*

- 4 Because of the multitude of the whoredoms^e of the
 well favoured harlot,
 The mistress of witchcrafts^f,
 That selleth nations through her whoredoms,
 And families through her witchcrafts,
 5 Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts,
 And I will discover thy skirts² upon thy face ; ² Or, *before*
 And I will shew the nations thy nakedness,
 And the kingdoms thy shame^g.

^a There will be no further opportunity to plunder. Cf. iii. 1.

^b Officers who exact tribute or enforce submission. Cf. Isa. xxxvi. 2 ; xxxvii. 9.

^c The city never ceases to plunder. Cf. ii. 13.

^d On the poetical force of this strikingly vivid description see Introd.,

p. 15.

^e Assyria enticed nations by promises of friendship, and so brought them under her power and exacted tribute.

^f Probably to be understood literally. Cf. Isa. ii. 6, where the parallelism suggests that from comparatively early times some forms of sorcery had been borrowed from the East, e.g. from Assyria.

^g The metaphor may have been suggested by a custom of stripping captives and thereby exposing them to ignominy and insult (cf. 2 Sam. x. 4), or to a similar treatment of shameless women (cf. Hos. ii. 3 ; Ezek. xvi. 37). The foulness of her true character would become known to all.

And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, 6
 And make thee vile,
 And will set thee as a gazingstock ^a.

And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon 7
 thee shall flee from thee, and say,

Nineveh is laid waste :
 Who will bemoan her ?
 Whence shall I seek comforters for thee ^b ?

*How could Nineveh expect to fare better than the
 mighty Thebes? iii. 8-11.*

Art thou better than No-amon^c, 8

+ ¹ Or,
 canals
 See Ex. vii.
 10.

That was situate among the ¹ rivers ^d,
 That had the waters round about her ;
 Whose rampart was ² the sea,

² That is, the Nile.

And her wall ³ was of the sea ^e ?

+ ³ Some ancient versions have, *was the waters.*

Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, 9
 And it was infinite ;

Put and Lubim were thy helpers ^f.
 Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity : 10
 Her young children also were dashed in pieces

At the top of all the streets :
 And they cast lots for her honourable men ^g,
 And all her great men were bound in chains.

Thou also shalt be drunken ^h, 11

Thou shalt be hid ;

* Or, a defence against

Thou also shalt seek ⁴ a strong hold
 Because of the enemy.

*Nineveh's forts, with their effeminate defenders, shall
 fall as ripe figs from a shaken tree. iii. 12-13.*

All thy fortresses shall be *like* fig trees with the 12
 firstripe figs :

^a As an object of contempt to others. Cf. Ezek. xxviii. 17.

^b It was useless to attempt to find comforters, because all would rejoice in her fall.

^c i.e. Thebes, the centre of the worship of Amon. Cf. Jer. xlvi. 25 ; Ezek. xxx. 14, &c. It was of later foundation than Memphis (see note on Isa. xix. 13), its only great rival, and was at the height of its splendour under the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties. Homer mentions its great wealth and its 'hundred gates' (*Iliad*, ix. 381). It had been sacked by Assyria herself, see *Introd.*, p. 13.

^d Canals connected with the Nile. Like Nineveh, Thebes was well protected by canals and streams.

^e The rendering of the Versions (marg.), which involves no change of the unpointed Hebrew text, is undoubtedly correct.

^f Put and Lubim (usually identified with Libyans), both probably neighbouring peoples of northern Africa, are here mentioned as allies of Egypt. See note on Isa. i. 29.

^g They were divided as slaves among the soldiers. Cf. Joel iii. 3.

^h Totter to thy fall. Cf. Jer. xxv. 15 ff. ; Isa. li. 17.

If they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.

- 13 Behold, thy people in the midst of thee are women ;
The gates of thy land are set wide open unto thine
enemies :
The fire hath devoured thy bars ^a.

*All their toilsome efforts to defend the city would be
useless. iii. 14-15 a.*

- 14 Draw thee water for the siege^b,
Strengthen thy fortresses :
Go into the clay, and tread the mortar ^c,
¹ Make strong the brickkiln^d.
15 There ^e shall the fire devour thee ;
The sword shall cut thee off,
It shall devour thee like the cankerworm ^f :

¹ Or, Lay
hold of the
brick-
mould †

*Her immense population, her numberless allies and
officers, would all suddenly disappear. iii. 15 b-17.*

Make thyself many as the cankerworm ^g,
Make thyself many as the locust.

- 16 Thou hast multiplied thy merchants ^h above the
stars of heaven :
The cankerworm ² spoileth ⁱ, and flieth away.
17 Thy crowned ^k are as the locusts ^l,

² Or,
spreadeth
himself

^a i. e. of the city gates. See note on Amos i. 5.

^b Nahum goes back in thought to the time previous to the siege. The invitation is, of course, sarcastic.

^c Clay was commonly used as mortar. It had to be trodden and well mixed with water to prevent its cracking. See note on Ezek. xiii. 10.

^d i. e. make new bricks to strengthen the walls.

^e The very place that thou hast so strongly fortified.

^f The enemy will make an end of thee as completely as the cankerworm destroys the herbage. Cankerworm, like caterpillar and palmerworm, is one of the forms, or perhaps species, of locusts. See note on Joel i. 4.

^g The mention of the cankerworm in the previous line suggests now a different application of the simile to the Assyrians themselves.

^h For a long time Assyria had become a great trading power. Partly from this cause, and partly from the repeated importations of captives, especially by Assur-bani-pal, the population of the city had enormously increased. What had been a nation of warriors had largely become an aggregate of aliens, who would be of no help to Nineveh in her trouble. See ii. 8 and note there.

ⁱ The meaning of this word is extremely uncertain. The root-meaning appears to be 'to spread abroad', but the word when used by itself almost invariably has the sense of making a raid or attack, as in Judg. ix. 44 and 1 Sam. xxiii. 27. Many commentators, taking the primary meaning as 'strip' (Lev. vi. 11 ; Isa. xxxii. 11), apply it to the young locust, which after *bursting the skin* of the pupa immediately flies away (see Driver). So rapidly will Nineveh's merchants vanish.

^k i. e. subordinate kings. Cf. Isa. x. 8.

^l i. e. in numbers ; a poetical hyperbole.

¹ Or, *scribes* And thy ¹ marshals ^a as the swarms of grasshoppers,
² Or, *walls* Which camp in the ² hedges in the cold day,
 But when the sun ariseth they flee away ^b,
 And their place is not known where they are.

*Her rulers are no more : she lies irretrievably
 ruined. iii. 18-19.*

Thy shepherds ^c slumber ^d, O king of Assyria : 18

Thy worthies are at rest :

Thy people are scattered ^e upon the mountains,
 And there is none to gather them.

There is no assuaging of thy hurt ; 19

Thy wound is grievous :

All that hear the bruit ^f of thee clap the hands over
 thee ;

For upon whom hath not thy wickedness ^g passed
 continually ?

^a Military officers, as in Jer. li. 27.

^b Locusts' wings are stiffened by the cold and weighted with the dew, but with warmth they recover their animation and fly away. 'Towards nightfall they light wherever they may happen to be . . . but the swarm invariably resumes its flight as soon as the sun has warmed it a little' (G. E. Post, *H.D.B.* iii. 130).

^c i. e. leaders. Cf. Jer. xxiii. 1-4 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 1-10.

^d i. e. in death. Cf. 1 Kings i. 21 ; Isa. xiv. 18.

^e i. e. like sheep without their shepherd. Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 17.

^f The report of Nineveh's fall.

^g See Introd., p. 13, note 3, for some of the enormities of 'the most brutal empire which was ever suffered to roll its force across the world' (G. A. Smith).

HABAKKUK

INTRODUCTION

BEYOND his name ('one who embraces') and the book which bears it, nothing is really known of this prophet. Whether the surmise that he was a Levite (iii. 9) is correct is far from certain. It seems, however, likely that he prophesied after the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.), and not long before the fall of Jerusalem (586 B.C.); for there can be but little doubt that he foresaw that the Chaldean power, which had already made many conquests (ii. 8), was to punish Judah for her iniquity.

The original home of the Chaldeans was the region where the Euphrates and the Tigris flow into the Persian Gulf. They had, with varying success, made frequent attempts to wrest Babylonia from Assyria. But it was only at the decline of the Assyrian power, and just a few years before the capture of Nineveh by the Medes (607 B.C.), that Nabopolassar, a Chaldean vassal of Assyria, was able to seize the throne of Babylon (625 B.C.), and in conjunction with the Medes put an end to the power of Assyria, which had itself originally been colonised by them and afterwards dominated over them¹.

Thus the New Babylonian Empire was founded, which came, however, to an early end in 539 B.C., when the Medes and Persians under Cyrus brought about the great fall of Babylon. It was probably about the commencement of this period, which, short as it was, was distinguished for its great power and splendour, that Habakkuk lived and prophesied. If so, he would have been contemporary with Nebuchadrezzar, the greatest ruler of the East. Sir Henry Layard has told us that there was scarcely a brick unearthed in the many mounds of the Babylonian plain which did not bear Nebuchadrezzar's name; while Babylon itself, with its new streets and colossal walls, its new palace and famous hanging gardens, above all its restored Temple of Belus, became in his reign practically a new city. (Cf. Hab. ii. 11-13.)

Nor was Nebuchadrezzar less vigorous in military enterprise. And the prophet's vivid descriptions of the swiftness and violence of the Chaldean foe (e.g. i. 5-11, 13-17) were probably suggested in large measure by the wars, more particularly from the time of the battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.), in which Nebuchadrezzar gave the death-blow to the pretensions of Egypt to a Syrian empire. We

¹ See Introduction to Nahum, p. 13.

know also that the Chaldeans were characterised by a lust of conquest and rapacity and a selfish pride, to which Habakkuk bears witness in the taunt-song already referred to (ii. 6-10, 15-19). It is especially this brutality and insatiable greed which suggested the grave moral problem which troubled the prophet's mind. He fully realised that the social and moral evils of Judah merited Divine chastisement (i. 1-4), but in the appointed instrument of that chastisement he saw one who was a far worse offender because of his fierce savagery and impious defiance of God (12-17). The final answer seems to have been that the prophet and those whom he represented needed patient and moral steadfastness (ii. 2-5, where see notes). God's justice would in the end vindicate itself by the overthrow of the Chaldeans (ii. 6-20).

By the greater attention which Habakkuk thus gives to the enemy's tyranny and violence he mainly differs from other prophets of that age. Jeremiah, for instance, is almost wholly occupied with the sin of his own people, whom the Chaldeans will scourge.

The whole book is full of lofty imagery and striking descriptions. If Habakkuk has borrowed from his predecessors some of his ideas and the glowing forms in which they are expressed¹, he has certainly made them peculiarly and distinctly his own². Nor has he failed in his turn to impress religious teachers who have lived long after him. One pregnant phrase has, mainly through its adoption by S. Paul and Luther, become, it might almost be said, the keynote of Christian doctrine (cf. Gal. iii. 11; Rom. i. 17).

Of the beautiful lyric ode in the third chapter* it has been said

¹ But it is always difficult to determine which of two similar passages is really the prior. (See Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, vi. 8.)

² It has been said with considerable truth that while other prophets 'attack the sins, he is the first to state the problem of life. . . . He illustrates the great commonplace of religious doubt, that problems arise and become vigorous in proportion to the purity and tenderness of a man's conception of God.' (See G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. ii, pp. 130-137.)

³ Many commentators maintain that this third chapter is a later addition to the book, and itself composite, chiefly on the ground (1) that it has, in the title, subscription, and musical note *Selah*, the common features of a psalm, and is probably taken from some Hebrew Psalter; (2) that the reference to fruit failures in ver. 17 as the cause of distress does not tally with references to the disastrous invasion of an enemy which seems referred to in the other part of the prophecy; (3) there are also some differences of style between the highly lyrical psalm-like rhythm of verses 3-16 and the rest of the book. The following solution is offered as, on the whole, best meeting the difficulties: that verses 3-16 were an older poem inserted by an editor to illustrate the work of God in the past; that thus expanded the book ended originally with verse 17, which is most naturally taken as a literal description of a famine (see note), but might be a metaphorical expression for a time of distress; that the whole chapter, like many early poems, was adapted for

that 'for the boldness and rapidity of its flights, the sublimity and grasp of its conceptions, the magnificence of its imagery, and the music and melody of its rhythm, it stands unsurpassed in the whole compass of Hebrew poetry' (Eadie). The value of Habakkuk's social teaching for our day has been emphasised by Ruskin, while his 'religious greatness' is, as Dr. Pusey¹ says, 'even more striking. His faith triumphs most when all in human sight is lost.

"Ill which Thou blessest is most good,
And unblest good is ill;
And all is right which seems most wrong,
So it be Thy sweet will!"

Patient, persevering, joyous confidence in God, be calamities what they may, is the chief lesson of this book: a theme which, because it belongs to all time, still endears Habakkuk to the Christian heart².

liturgical use, by the psalm-like addition of verses 18 and 19, the title being added as in many other Psalms; and lastly, in its thus enlarged and more familiar form, it naturally found its way back into copies of Habakkuk. See p. 34, note f.

¹ *Minor Prophets*, p. 405.

² For the many curious legends connected with Habakkuk see Driver in *H.D.B.* vol. ii, p. 272.

HABAKKUK

(I) AN ORACLE OF PERPLEXITY. i-ii.

The Superscription. i. 1.

† ¹ Or,
oracle

THE ¹burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see. 1

I. THE DEEP SEARCHINGS OF THE PROPHET'S SOUL. i. 2—ii. 4.

*Why does Jehovah permit the prevalent tyranny which
paralyses religion and justice^a? i. 2-4.*

O LORD, how long shall I cry, 2
And thou wilt not hear?

I cry out unto thee of violence,
And thou wilt not save.

² Or, cause
me to look

Why dost thou shew me iniquity, 3
And ²look upon ^bperverseness?

For spoiling and violence are before me :
And there is strife, and contention riseth up ^c.

³ Or, goeth
not forth
unto victory

Therefore the law is slacked, 4
And judgement ³doth never go forth ^d :

For the wicked doth compass about the righteous ;
Therefore judgement goeth forth perverted ^e.

*The answer : Retribution is near ; the avenging instru-
ment exulting in his cruelty and impiety. i. 5-11.*

Behold ye among the nations, and regard, 5
And wonder marvellously ^f :

⁴ Or, one
worketh

For ⁴I work ^ga work in your days,
Which ye will not believe though it be told you.

*N.B. An obelus (†) attached to a marginal note shews that the alternative
rendering or reading is preferred, or calls attention to some other important point.*

^a i. 2-4 probably refers to civil and religious disorder in Judah, to be punished
by the Chaldean invasion (5-11) ; but some commentators have referred it to
the oppression of Israel by some foe, Assyrian or Egyptian, and various re-
arrangements of the text, more or less unsatisfactory, have been proposed.

^b i. e. without punishing, or at any rate, without being concerned about it.
Cf. ver. 13.

^c The prophet's outlook is wholly taken up with Israel's disorders, strife, and
litigiousness.

^d 'Law', i. e. the Divine teaching, has reference to the religious, 'judgement'
to the civil sphere ; in both there is paralysis and corruption.

^e People cannot obtain justice.

^f 'Be astonished and astounded.' Two parts of the same Hebrew verb are
here used for the sake of emphasis.

^g Better, 'He worketh' ; i. e. Jehovah.

- 6 For, lo, I raise up ^a the Chaldeans,
That bitter and hasty ^b nation ;
Which march through the breadth of the earth,
To possess dwelling places that are not theirs.

- 7 ^{1c} They are terrible and dreadful : ¹ Heb. *He*,
and so in
vv. 8, 9. †
Their judgement and their dignity proceed from
themselves ^d.

- 8 Their horses also are swifter than leopards,
And are more fierce than the evening wolves ;
And their horsemen ² spread themselves ^e :
Yea, their horsemen come from far ;
They fly as an eagle that hasteth to devour.

² Or, *bear
themselves
proudly* †

³ Heb. *The
eagerness
(or assem-
bling) of
their faces
is &c.* †

- 9 They come all of them for violence ;
³ Their faces are set eagerly ⁴ as the east wind ;
And they gather captives as the sand ^f.

- 10 ⁵ Yea, he ^g scoffeth at kings,
And princes are a derision unto him :
He derideth every strong hold ;
For he heapeth up dust ^h, and taketh it.

⁴ Or,
*towards
the east*
Or, *for-
wards* †

⁵ Or, *And
they scoff
&c.*

- 11 ⁶ Then shall he sweep by as a wind,
And shall ⁷ pass over, and be guilty :
Even he whose might is his god ⁱ.

⁶ Or, *Then
shall the
wind sweep
by, and he
shall pass
away*

⁷ Or, *trans-
gress* †

*But why, again, is it that the holy, everlasting God
should use such a godless instrument to punish
sinners less wicked than himself? i. 12-17.*

- 12 Art not thou from everlasting, O LORD
My God, mine Holy One?
⁸ We shall not die ^k.

⁸ Accord-
ing to an
ancient
Jewish tra-
dition,
*Thou diest
not.* †

^a i.e. for the particular purpose in view, for, of course, the Chaldeans were already on the stage of history, as indeed the following clauses imply. See p. 25.

^b There is again an assonance in the Hebrew words.

^c By the change to the plural pronoun in ver. 7-9 (see marg.) the force and grandeur of this personification of the Chaldean power is very much weakened.

^d A line of very uncertain meaning. Gesenius explains the second substantive as 'a decree'. This would mean that the enemy is executing God's sentence. But the word never bears this meaning elsewhere. Very possibly the text is corrupt.

^e A word chosen for the sake of assonance. It is used in Mal. iv. 2 of calves gambolling (R.V.) ; in Jer. l. 11 of a wanton (R.V.) heifer.

^f Like innumerable grains of sand. Cf. Gen. xxii. 17.

^g There is no change of pronoun. It is still the Chaldeans personified. See note on ver. 7.

^h Mounds of earth were raised for taking fortresses. See note on Jer. xxxii. 24.

ⁱ Intoxicated by his victories he deifies his own power.

^k The rendering of the margin, which depends upon a very slight alteration of

+ : See
Deut. xxxii.
4.

O LORD, thou hast ordained him for judgement ^a ;
And thou, O ¹ Rock ^b, hast established him for
correction.

Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, 13
And that canst not look on perverseness ^c,
Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treach-
erously ^d,

And holdest thy peace when the wicked swalloweth
up the man that is more righteous than he ;
And makest men as the fishes of the sea, 14
As the creeping things, that have no ruler over
them ^e ?

He taketh up all of them with the angle, 15
He catcheth them in his net,
And gathereth them in his drag :
Therefore he rejoiceth and is glad.

Therefore he sacrificeth unto his net, 16
And burneth incense unto his drag ^f ;
Because by them his portion is fat,

² Heb. *fat*.

And his meat ² plenteous.
Shall he therefore empty his net ^g, 17
And not spare to slay the nations continually ?

The prophet patiently waits for the answer. ii. 1.

I will stand upon my watch ^h, 2

² Or, *for-
tress*

And set me upon the ³ tower,
And will look forth to see what he will speak
⁴ with me,

⁴ Or, *by*

And what I shall answer concerning my com-
plaint ⁱ.

the text, is more suitable to the context, the point as thus expressed being that because Jehovah is the everlasting and great God He should be able and willing to frustrate the purposes of the Chaldeans. The prophet is, as yet, only stating the problem, not giving the solution.

^a i.e. to correct and chastise Israel.

^b A frequent simile as applied to God, the chief thought being that of strength and protection, less frequently that of shelter. Cf. Ps. xviii. 2 ; Isa. xxxii. 2. Rabbinical writers even used it as a synonym for God.

^c See note on ver. 3.

^d See Isa. xxi. 2 ; xxiv. 16.

^e Therefore weak and powerless before a relentless foe.

^f Herodotus (iv. lxii) tells us that every year the Scythians offered sacrifices to a sword set up as a symbol of Ares, the god of war. Habakkuk may possibly refer to some such practice, but it may merely be a poetical way of saying that he recognises no god but his own powers. See ver. 11.

^g Is he to be allowed to get the benefit of his spoils ?

^h i.e. the prophetic watch-tower, from which he foresees the future. Cf. Isa. xxi. 6, 11, &c.

ⁱ Complaint or argument as presented in i. 12-17. The answer meant is probably not that which the prophet might further feel disposed to make to

JEHOVAH'S ANSWER TO THE PROPHET'S
DOUBT. ii. 2-4.

He is to write the vision and then post it up for all to see, and wait patiently for its fulfilment. ii. 2-3.

- 2 And the LORD answered me, and said,
Write the vision ^a, and make it plain upon tables ^b,
That he may run that readeth it ^c.
3 For the vision is yet for the appointed time,
And it ^d hasteth toward the end ^d, and shall not lie: ^e Heb.
Though it tarry, wait for it; ^f *patienth.* †
Because it will surely come, it will not delay ^e.

The reward of steadfastness contrasted with arrogance. ii. 4.

- 4 Behold, his soul is puffed up,
It is not ² upright in him
But the just shall live ³ by his faith ^f.
² Or, *straight*
³ Or, *in his faithfulness* †

II. THE TAUNT-SONG OF OUTRAGED
HUMANITY AGAINST THE CHALDEANS.

ii. 5-20.

Introduction: The cry is called forth by his insatiable greed. ii. 5-6 a.

- 5 ⁴Yea, moreover, wine is a treacherous dealer,
A haughty man, and ⁵ that keepeth not at home ^g; ⁴ Or, *And also because his wine ... he is a haughty man*
⁵ Or, *he shall not abide*

God, but to those who felt as Habakkuk did, and on whose behalf he conceives himself as speaking.

^a The word 'vision' is almost invariably the future, which the prophet sees by Divine power. The future here implied appears to be the downfall of the Chaldean power, which might seem to human impatience too long delayed. Possibly a prophecy describing this more explicitly after ver. 4 has been lost. The suggestion of Budde, followed by some other scholars, that i. 5-11 originally followed ii. 4 does not meet the difficulty, because its subject is the judgement effected by, not upon, the Chaldeans.

^b Tablets were used for important notices. Cf. Isa. viii. 1.

^c The reader must be able to read it without the least difficulty.

^d 'The prophecy is, as it were, personified, or represented as pressing on eagerly to its accomplishment' (Driver).

^e For the vision, which will neither deceive nor fail, there is a time determined beforehand, and it will not seem long to those who have patience. See critical note on ver. 2.

^f 'Let the righteous, however baffled his faith be by experience, hold on in loyalty to God and duty, and he shall live' (G. A. Smith). The destined destruction of arrogant tyranny seems implied, while the survival of moral steadfastness is explicitly stated. But Wellhausen and Nowack suggest the insertion of 'the sinner' after 'Behold', in contrast to 'the just'.

^g This verse is very obscure. Henderson suggests that a proverbial saying is here quoted with special reference to the Chaldeans: 'Wine is treacherous; the haughty man stayeth not at home.' But the text is certainly corrupt, and 'wine'

†¹ Heb.
Sheol.

Who enlargeth his desire as ¹ hell,
And he is as death, and cannot be satisfied,
But gathereth unto him all nations,
And heapeth unto him all peoples.

Or, *riddle*

Shall not all these take up a parable ^a against him, 6
And a taunting ² proverb against him, and say,

(1) *His grasping rapacity, as of a merciless usurer.*
ii. 6 b-8.

Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his !
how long ?

†² Or,
*exact
usury of
thee*

And that ladeth himself with pledges ^b !
Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall ³ bite thee, 7
And awake that shall ⁴ vex thee,
And thou shalt be for booties unto them ?

†⁴ Or, *toss
thee to and
fro*

Because thou hast spoiled many nations, 8
All the remnant of the peoples shall spoil thee :

Because of men's blood, and for the vio-
lence done to the land,
To the city and to all that dwell therein ^c.

(2) *His overreaching self-aggrandisement.* ii. 9-11.

Woe to him that getteth an evil gain for his^d
house^d,

That he may set his nest on high ^e,
That he may be delivered from the hand of
evil ^f !

Thou hast consulted shame to thy house, 10
By cutting off many peoples,
And hast sinned against thy soul ^g.
For the stone shall cry out of the wall, 11
And the beam out of the timber shall answer it ^h.

is not found in either LXX or Syriac versions. There can be little doubt that the subject of this sentence was the Chaldeans, personified as in i. 7 ff.

^a A derisive song. Cf. Isa. xiv. 4 ; Mic. ii. 4.

^b Spoils, which, like a relentless usurer, he has taken from the nations. See Deut. xxiv. 10 ; Job xx. 10, 15, 20.

^c This refrain, recurring also in ver. 17, may have originally ended each strophe. Or it may have got into the text here from that place, where the reference to Palestine and Jerusalem is more suitable.

^d That employs ill-gotten gains for building his house. Cf. Jer. xxii. 13.

^e Like the eagle in inaccessible strongholds. Cf. Obad. 4 ; Jer. xlix. 16.

^f From calamity ; i. e. secure himself against conquest.

^g Their very conquests only hastened their degradation, and the shame which they devised for others would result in the forfeiture of their life. Isa. x. 12-19 ; xiv. 20.

^h The materials used for building their palaces will testify to the 'evil gain' by which they were built. Cf. Luke xix. 40.

(3) *His tyranny of forced and oppressive labour.*

ii. 12-14.

- 12 Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood ^a,
And stablisheth a city by iniquity !
- 13 Behold, is it not of the LORD of hosts
That the peoples labour for the fire,
And the nations weary themselves for vanity ^b ?
- 14 For the earth shall be filled with the know-
ledge of the glory of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea ^c.

(4) *His shameless treatment of foreign nations and their territory would recoil on his own head.* ii. 15-17.

- 15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink,
That ¹addest thy ²venom *thereto*, ¹ Or, *pourest †*
And makest him drunken also, ² Or, *fury*
That thou mayest look on their nakedness ^d !
- 16 Thou art filled with shame for glory :
Drink thou also, and ³be as one uncircumcised : ³ Or, *let thy foreskin be uncovered †*
The cup of the LORD's right hand shall be turned
unto thee,
And foul shame shall be upon thy glory ^e.
- 17 For the violence done to Lebanon ^f shall cover thee,
And the destruction of the beasts, ⁴ which made ⁴ According to many ancient versions, *shall make thee afraid. †*
them afraid ;
Because of men's blood, and for the violence done to the land,
To the city and to all that dwell therein ^g.

^a i. e. 'murder' : labour so cruel that in some cases it involved even the death of the labourer. Cf. Mic. iii. 10.

^b God's decree is that conflagration and annihilation will be the result of all the labour and weariness of the peoples who have slaved in building.

^c The vindication of God's justice in the punishment of the Chaldeans would be the first step towards this glorious consummation. The words are adapted from Isa. xi. 9.

^d A nation conquered by the Chaldeans is here figured as a prostrate and ignominious drunkard. Notice the change of pronoun in the three last lines, and cf. Nah. iii. 11 and Jer. xxv. 15. In the latter passage the word 'fury' is the same as that here rendered 'venom' (a meaning supported by Ps. lviii. 4), and perhaps it should be rendered 'fury' in this passage, though the other meaning seems more suitable in itself.

^e Similar disgrace and humiliation shall be for the conqueror.

^f Cf. Isa. xiv. 8. Their treatment of the trees and beasts would haunt them. Some have seen in the last word a metaphorical reference to slaughtered men.

^g See note on ver. 8.

(5) *His senseless idolatry.* ii. 18-20.

What profiteth the graven image, 18

That the maker thereof hath graven it ;

The molten image, and the teacher of lies ^a,

¹ Or, *its*

That the maker of ¹ his work trusteth therein,

To make dumb idols ?

Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake ^b ; 19

To the dumb stone, Arise !

Shall this teach ?

Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver ^c,

And there is no breath at all in the midst of it ^d.

But the LORD is in his holy temple ^e : 20

² Let all the earth keep silence before him.

² Heb. *Be
silent
before him,
all the
earth.*

(II) A PSALM OF PRAYER AND HOPE ^f. iii.

The Title. iii. 1.

A prayer ^g of Habakkuk the prophet, set to Shigionoth ^h. 3

(1) *A TERRIFIED APPEAL FOR THE RENEWAL
OF GOD'S GREAT WORK ON ISRAEL'S BEHALF.*
iii. 2.

¹ Or, *thy
fame*

O LORD, I have heard ³ the report of thee, and ⁴ am ²
afraid :

⁴ Or, *was*

O LORD, revive thy work ⁱ in the midst of the
years ^k,

In the midst of the years make it known ;

In wrath remember mercy.

^a The idol being itself a lie teacheth lies ; at any rate the dumb thing cannot teach anything else. Cf. Isa. xlv. 20 ; Ps. cxv. 7.

^b Cf. 1 Kings xviii. 27. As this verse begins with ' woe ' (cf. ver. 6, 9, 12, 15), it is possible that it originally preceded ver. 18.

^c Idols were frequently made of wood plated with precious metals. Cf. Isa. xl. 19, &c. ^d Cf. Ps. cxv. 7.

^e In heaven. See Ps. xi. 4 ; Zeph. i. 7 ; Zech. ii. 13. The silence is a result of the awe-inspiring glory of God contrasted with the contemptible inanity of the idols.

^f Kuenen and Cheyne shew that this ode belonged to one of the collections of Psalms in use in the Temple worship. ' Perhaps the only reason for its exclusion from the Psalms, as we now possess them, was that the editors of the prophetic canon had already appropriated it ' (*Encycl. Bibl.* 1927). And yet it has been largely adapted in Ps. lxxvii. 16-20. See critical note, p. 26.

^g Cf. Ps. cii. 1.

^h This is the plural of Shiggaion, which is found in the title of Ps. vii, and is believed to be derived from a word ' to wander ', and so to mean a ' dithyrambic song, one characterised by various feelings and rhythms ' (Ewald, Delitzsch, &c.). But the meaning is very uncertain.

ⁱ The ever-repeated triumph of Jehovah over Israel's foes from the time of the Exodus onwards, with special reference to the Exodus and the Wanderings. See note on ver. 3 ff.

^k i. e. now, after the many years since the Exodus.

(2) *A THEOPHANY RECALLING GOD'S WORK
IN THE PAST.* iii. 3-16.

*The terrible manifestation of God in a storm advancing
from the south.* iii. 3-8.

- 3 God ^a came from Teman ^b, ¹ Or, *cometh*
(and similarly to the
end of
ver. 15) †
And the Holy One from mount Paran ^c. [Selah ^d
His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of his praise ^e.
4 And *his* brightness was as the light ^f ;
He had ² rays ^g *coming forth* ³ from his hand : ² Heb.
horns. †
And there was the hiding of his power ^h. ³ Or, *at his*
side †
5 Before him went the pestilence,
And ⁴ fiery bolts went forth at his feet ⁱ. ⁴ Or, *burning*
coals †
6 He stood ^k, and ⁵ measured the earth ; ⁵ Or, *shook*
He beheld, and drove asunder the nations :
And the eternal mountains were scattered,

^a In what follows we have references more or less probable to the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan (15, 8), the Divine manifestation on Sinai (3, 4), the pestilence in the desert (5), the victory of Joshua over the five kings of the Amorites (11), the conquest of Canaan (12-14), and possibly events of the times of the Judges (7, where see note). This retrospect of the glorious past is introduced to emphasise Jehovah's approach once more in Divine majesty to crush his enemies (the Chaldeans) in the prophet's own time.

^b An important district of Edom, here practically put for Edom.

^c 'The range of hills between Sinai and Seir, which stretches beside the Elamitic Gulf as far as Aila (Elath)' (Buhl). Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 2; Judges v. 4, 5; Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8. In all these passages the thought seems to be that God appeared from Sinai in a splendour which, like the morning, covered the heavens with light and filled the earth with glory.

^d A musical or liturgical sign of some kind, perhaps meaning 'lift up! loud!' — a direction to the orchestra to strike in with louder music.

^e A poetical hyperbole. Everywhere men would recognise God's glory.

^f Probably the sun. Cf. Job xxxi. 26; Prov. iv. 18.

^g Lit. two horns; i. e. rays of light, one at either side of Him. Cf. Ps. l. 3; Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30, 35.

^h Beneath the outward manifestation is the inward hiding-place of Omnipotence.

ⁱ Behind Him. Jehovah 'is figured as a king making a victorious progress through His enemies' country. Pestilence and fever are personified as His attendants, the one preceding Him as His armourbearer (1 Sam. xvii. 7) or courier (2 Sam. xv. 1), the other following behind (1 Sam. xxv. 42) as His servant, and executing His behests. Cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 13' (Driver). The 'burning coals' (margin) are explained either as thunderbolts (text) or as fevers. The former is the most natural meaning of the single Hebrew word, but the other best suits the parallelism.

^k God stands and surveys the earth before executing His judgement upon it. But the margin, which agrees with LXX, is not improbably the true rendering. See Driver.

The everlasting hills did bow ^a;

¹ Or, *His ways are everlasting*

¹ His goings were *as* of old ^b.

I saw the tents of Cushan ^c in affliction : 7

The curtains ^d of the land of Midian did tremble.

^e Was the LORD displeased against the rivers ? 8

Was thine anger against the rivers,

Or thy wrath against the sea,

That thou didst ride upon thine horses,

Upon thy chariots of salvation ^f ?

All nature is convulsed and terrified at His approach.

iii. 9-11.

Thy bow was made quite bare ^g; 9

² The oaths to the tribes were a *sure* word ^h.

[Selah

Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers ⁱ.

The mountains saw thee, and ³ were afraid ^k; 10

The tempest of waters passed by ^l :

The deep uttered his voice,

And lifted up his hands ^m on high.

The sun and moon stood still in their habitation ⁿ ;

At the light of thine arrows as they went,

At the shining of thy glittering spear ^o.

^a i. e. sink, as in an earthquake.

^b Probably referring to the repeated triumphs of Jehovah over Israel's enemies since the Exodus. See note on ver. 3 ff.

^c Tribes about Sinai are probably meant in both parts of the verse. These tremble at God's judgements (cf. Exod. xv. 14-18). It is possible, however, that the reference may be to Cushan-rishathaim whom Othniel overcame (Judges iii. 8-10), and to the Midianites of Gideon's time (Judges vi).

^d i. e. tent-hangings.

^e It has been conjectured that ver. 15 originally preceded ver. 8.

^f The prophet probably conceives of Jehovah as riding before His people.

^g The battle-bow was taken out of its covering for use.

^h The text is hopelessly corrupt. What is really wanted is some description of the discharge of arrows from the bow. Marti suggests, 'Thou didst wholly empty thy quiver, Thy bow was satiate (cf. Jer. xlvi. 10) with shafts,' i. e. rods (margin) (Driver).

ⁱ The deep channels made by the rushing of water down the mountain sides.

^k The mountains appeared to be in throes because of the storm and earthquake. Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 16.

^l 'Advanced.' In the Hebrew the words differ only very slightly from the first clause of Ps. lxxvii. 17, 'the clouds poured out water,' and many scholars adopt this reading here. But Ewald takes it of the Red Sea floods sweeping on the Egyptians.

^m The waves of the sea. Cf. Ps. lxxvii. 16.

ⁿ Some refer this to the events of Joshua x. See note on ver. 3 ff. But the reference is very probably to the thick covering of thunder-cloud under which the sun and moon remained hidden.

^o 'Arrows' and 'spear' both refer to the lightnings (Ps. xviii. 14; lxxvii. 17)

*It is to deliver His people and overthrow their enemies
that Jehovah is coming. iii. 12-14 a.*

- 12 Thou didst march through the land in indigna-
tion,
Thou didst thresh ^a the nations in anger.
13 Thou ¹ wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, ¹ Or, *art*
² For the salvation of thine anointed ^b; ² Or, *For*
³ Thou ⁴ woundedst the head out of the house of ³ Or, *Thou*
the wicked, ⁴ Or, *didst smite*
Laying bare the foundation even unto the ⁵ Or, *from the*
neck ^c. [Selah] ⁵ Or, *house &c. †*
14 Thou ⁵ didst pierce with his own staves the head ⁶ Or, *hast*
of his ⁶ warriors ^d; ⁶ Or, *wounded*

*The prophet's agitation and alarm at the approach of
the enemy. iii. 14 b-16.*

- They came as a whirlwind to scatter me :
Their rejoicing was as to devour the poor
secretly ^e.
15 Thou ⁷ didst tread the sea with thine horses,
The ⁸ heap of mighty waters ^f. ⁷ Or, *surge*
⁸ Or, *wait-*
16 I heard, and my belly trembled ^g, ⁹ Or, *When*
My lips quivered at the voice ^h; ¹⁰ Or, *he that shall*
Rottenness entered into my bones, ¹¹ Or, *invade*
And I trembled in my place ⁱ: ¹² Or, *troops*
That I should rest ⁹ in the day of trouble, ¹³ Or, *cometh up*
¹⁰ When it cometh up against the people ¹¹ which ¹⁴ Or, *against the*
invadeth him in troops ^k. ¹⁵ Or, *people*
¹⁶ Or, *invade*
¹⁷ Or, *them*

which lit up the heavens, and, according to the interpretation of ver. 11 a, here preferred, made the sun and moon afraid to come out of their abode.

^a Lit. 'trample upon'. Cf. Deut. xxv. 4; Micah iv. 13.

^b Jehovah marches by the side of the king to victory; i. e. the king conquers by God's help.

^c The destruction of 'the house of the wicked', with only the lower walls and foundations left standing, is here compared to a man beheaded.

^d Hostile troops slew one another in confusion. Cf. 1 Sam. xiv. 20; 2 Chron. xx. 23, 24; Zech. xiv. 13. But perhaps 'thy staves' is the proper reading; the text of the whole line is probably corrupt.

^e The figure appears to be that of the exultation of a robber or beast of prey who has a defenceless traveller in a secluded place.

^f This verse seems very much out of place here. See note on ver. 8.

^g Fear pervades the whole body.

^h Probably thunder, as frequently in O. T.

ⁱ Where I stood.

^k The meaning of the last two lines is very obscure, and no satisfactory explanation has been given. Marti and Wellhausen read from an amended text, 'And my steps tremble when I stand; but I shall rest in the day of trouble, when the people that troopeth upon me cometh up.' See Driver.

3) *IN SPITE OF PRESENT DISTRESS THE PROPHET HAS IN JEHOVAH UNSHAKEN CONFIDENCE AND JOY.* iii. 17-19.

For though ^a the fig tree shall not blossom^b, 17
 Neither shall fruit be in the vines ;
 The labour of the olive shall fail,
 And the fields shall yield no meat ;
 The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
 And there shall be no herd in the stalls :
 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, 18
 I will joy in the God of my salvation.
 Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength, 19
 And he maketh my feet like hinds' feet^c,
 And will make me to walk upon mine high
 places.

The Subscription.

For the Chief Musician, on ^d my stringed instruments.

^a This should be more probably rendered 'For the fig tree doth not blossom, neither is there fruit in the vines', and so on. See critical note, p. 26.

^b Ancient authors speak of the fig tree as bearing fruit without flowers, but the fig itself is the inflorescence, so that this expression is strictly accurate. See Hastings's *D.B.* ii, p. 30.

^c i. e. swift and sure, to escape from the enemy and to reach the high places of safety. Cf. Ps. xviii. 32, 33 ; Deut. xxxiii. 29. In the last passage the high places trodden on are those of the foe, and with a very slight alteration of text this meaning would be possible both here and in Ps. xviii.

^d i. e. sung to the accompaniment of (in religious worship). 'My' should probably be deleted ; otherwise it refers to the worshipping congregation, as in Isa. xxxviii. 20.

JEREMIAH

INTRODUCTION

1. *His life and work.*

WHAT we know of Jeremiah is gathered from his book, being told partly by himself¹ and partly, it would seem, by his biographer. His home was at Anathoth², about two and a half miles to the north-east of Jerusalem. This little village, now called Anata, overlooks the bare limestone hills and enormous ravines which extend to the plain of the Dead Sea. The fascination of this dreary wilderness of Judea, with its dry scorching winds, was felt by Jeremiah and Amos, who also lived facing it, and has found expression in the prophecies of both³. Whether Jeremiah's father was, as some think, the high priest Hilkiah who discovered the Deuteronomic law in the eighteenth year of Josiah (2 Kings xxii. 8) cannot now be known, but he was certainly of a priestly family (i. 1), though probably not himself a priest. This may partly account for his strong protests against pure formalism in religion (see iii. 16; vii. 4). That he was a man of means is clear from the fact that he was able to pay the redemption money of a field (xxxii. 6-15). He was never married (xvi. 2), and in this he believed himself to be fulfilling an express command from God.

He was called to be a prophet in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, 626 B.C. (see i. 2). His work, carried on chiefly in Jerusalem, lasted at least forty years, i.e. until after the siege of the city, 586 B.C.

It is probable that his early prophecies, especially ch. ii-vi, were among the influences which brought about the reforms of Josiah in the eighteenth and nineteenth years of his reign (2 Kings xxii. 8-xxiii. 24). At any rate he threw all his weight into that cause, and strongly urged the importance of observing the Deuteronomic law then discovered (xi. 1-8; see 2 Kings xxiii. 2-8). That he continued to advocate the cause of a pure religion and a high morality during Josiah's reign we may safely assume, but it is

¹ No other prophet 'has taken us with such intimacy into his life, both public and private' (Moulton). 'His prophecies are his autobiography' (Wordsworth). How full the book is of personal details may be seen from i. 1-10; xi. 21-xii. 6; xx-xxi. 10; xxvi; xxxii; xxxvi-xliv.

² See note on i. 1.

³ See ii. 24, 31; iv. 11, 26; v. 6; xii. 10, 12; xiv. 6; xvii. 6; xlviii. 6. Cf. Amos iii. 3-8, 12; v. 19; vi. 12.

uncertain whether any of his extant prophecies belong to this period. A reaction which had been smouldering long before seems to have broken out at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign (608 B.C.), and Jeremiah at once stands out as its uncompromising opponent. And now we see how the prophet's loyalty to what he knows to be God's message to him and his people triumphs over the timidity of his nature (cf. xx. 8, 9).

Jehoiakim's fourth year was an important crisis in the history of Judah and of the surrounding nations. At Carchemish was fought one of the decisive battles of the world, in which Nebuchadrezzar, then Nabopolassar's general, defeated the Egyptian Pharaoh Neco, and thus Babylon became the ruling power of the time (see ch. xlv). Jeremiah sees in the future conquests of Babylon God's punishment both of idolatrous foreign nations and of Judah for having allowed herself to be misguided by them (xxv), though it is probably going too far to suppose with the LXX that the whole of xlv—li (or even of xlv—xlix) were written at this juncture. From this time Jeremiah feels more and more convinced that his country is doomed, and that her only course is to submit to God's hand. When Jehoiachin (Jeconiah, Coniah) was taken captive (597 B.C.), he counsels the exiles to settle down comfortably in Babylon (xxiv, xxix). Jeremiah's attitude called forth constant antagonism and indignation and sometimes violent persecution. At one time he is placed in the stocks for having preached against the Temple (xx. 1-6). An attack by his own acquaintances at Anathoth is aimed against his life (xi. 18-23). Another attack by the priests and people would have ended in judicial murder but for the timely pleading of some of the more influential nobles (xxvi. 10-24). An escape from Jehoiakim's rage, whom he had threatened in no measured terms, was realised as providential (xxxvi. 26; see xxii. 24-26).

At the time of the final siege of Jerusalem at the close of Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah's Philo-Babylonian policy was regarded as highly dangerous and rendered him liable to suspicion. Being accused of an attempt to desert, as many had already done, to the enemy, he was imprisoned and suffered many hardships and privations, and so remained until the city was taken (xxxvii, xxxviii). And yet he was not altogether without allies and helpers. A large number must have regarded him with respect. Even the king, though in a weak and timid fashion, sought his advice and befriended him, a fact to which he owed some amelioration of his troubles, and very probably his life. When the city was taken Jeremiah, being given by Nebuchadrezzar's orders the choice of going to Babylon or remaining at Jerusalem, decided to place himself under the protection of Gedaliah, the newly appointed governor of the city, and after the murder of the latter by Ishmael, was eventually carried by force,

with many others, into Egypt (xxxix—xlili), where his last published words were a prediction of the conquest of that country by Nebuchadrezzar (xliv), a prediction which was actually fulfilled, however, by Cambyzes. We do not know how long Jeremiah survived the capture of Jerusalem, or where or how he died. There is, however, a tradition, mentioned by Tertullian, Jerome, and others, that the men of Tahpanes, stung by his bitter words, stoned him to death; and it has been thought that in Heb. xi. 37 there is an allusion to this circumstance. But, however this may be, it is in Egypt that 'amid mournful surroundings of obstinate idolatry, his teaching spurned and misunderstood, his country waste and desolate, the curtain falls upon the great prophet's life in darkness and desolation'¹.

2. *His character and message.*

The whole of Jeremiah's life seems to have been one of great and prolonged sorrow². He has been well called 'the weeping prophet', and is proverbially the herald of gloom. This was, of course, largely due to the times in which he lived. There being no hope for the political redemption of his people, he saw that their only chance of personal safety lay in surrendering to Babylon. If, as the calamity approached, he foresaw the dawn of a more glorious hope (xxx, xxxi), it was only in the distant future after a period of servitude and humiliation.

But the gloom was even more the result of an acutely sensitive disposition³. Other prophets in foretelling the Divine judgements were frequently so completely overpowered by their message that their own feelings were absorbed in the Divine wrath with which they were inspired, and they became almost literally the mouthpiece of God. But this was seldom the case with Jeremiah. At times, indeed, he felt the justice of God's judgements, and the voice of God speaks through him (vi. 11-15). But more than once he distinguishes this Divine fury from his own personal feelings as a

¹ Montefiore's *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 208: 'Whatever its end may have been, his life was a long and noble martyrdom' (*Encycl. Bibl.* ii. 2371).

² In the well-known statue in the Sistine Chapel, Michael Angelo has portrayed him as brooding with downcast eyes in sorrowful meditation. Plumptre shewed how much indebted to Jeremiah Dante was when giving the world his *Divine Comedy*. Cheyne compares him to Savonarola, who, in his later sermons, frequently referred to Jeremiah; while Stanley imagined Jeremiah lamenting with Hamlet:

'The time is out of joint; O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right.'

³ This has been repeatedly noticed, from S. Gregory Nazianzus who calls him 'the most sympathetic of the prophets', to Ewald who wrote of him as 'the most human prophet the kingdom ever possessed', and to F. D. Maurice who spoke of his 'feminine tenderness and susceptibility'.

painful burden too heavy for him to bear (xv. 10-18). Over and over again he bewails, sometimes with exquisite pathos, the miseries which are coming upon his people and his land (viii. 18-ix. 1; xiv. 7-9); or again, he mourns over the sins which made their punishment necessary (ix. 2-6). The same sensitiveness affected keenly his relations with his fellow-men; he bitterly resented not only the actual persecutions which he sometimes had to endure, but also the isolation and want of sympathy which he constantly experienced (xv. 10, 15-18; xx. 7-18). Warm-hearted as he was, he was not content, as Isaiah had once been (Isa. viii. 16-18), to withdraw himself into the society of a small circle of sympathetic disciples. Indeed, it is very doubtful whether he had any such disciples. To the professional time-serving prophets of his day he stood in direct antagonism, and his doleful temperament would hardly have attracted the more sanguine and youthful spirits. In fact, so far as we can gather, Baruch seems to have been in the end his only faithful and constant adherent. Jeremiah's feelings of solitude and isolation caused him frequently to take refuge in religious meditation which, with an absence of reserve that often characterises deeply sensitive natures, he has preserved in his book. In this respect, and in the self-analysis which some of them called forth, we are reminded more than once of S. Paul (cf. Rom. vii. 7-25; 2 Cor. xi. 5-xii), and they are of great interest from a psychological point of view. Here, too, Jeremiah distinguishes very clearly between the workings of his natural self and the voice of God within him. So much is this the case that in more than one instance they assume the form of a dialogue between himself and Jehovah (xii. 1-6; xiv. 7-xv).

Jeremiah is sometimes charged with being, if not, as his enemies regarded him, a coward and a traitor, at least a mean-spirited and unpatriotic subject. Such charges arise from not looking at his character and conduct from his own point of view. Had he been unpatriotic he would not have so grieved over the fate of Jerusalem, and had he lacked courage he would not have dared to have been so persistently a prophet of evil. He was naturally timid no doubt, and it was only by a splendid effort of moral courage that he nerved himself to his difficult task¹ (i. 4-10; xv. 19-21; xx. 8, 9). It has

¹ 'When', as Ewald says, 'the truth and the spirit of Jehovah calls him, or the resisting world provokes him to the contest, he then knows nothing of diffidence and fear, nothing of tenderness and pliability, he contends before the eyes of all with the most decisive energy against every false prophet who misleads the people (xxviii. 6 ff.; xxix. 15 ff., 24 ff.) . . . and is never weary of speaking against every kind of arbitrariness, wherever and in whatever form it is found (xxxiv. 8-22; xxxvii. 14 ff.). See also xxii. 1-19; xxxiv. 2-7; i. 18; ii. 26; iv. 9' (*The Prophets*, vol. iii). 'The contrasts revealed in his life have been epigrammatically expressed by calling him a figure "cast in brass, dissolving in tears".' Davidson, *H.D.B.* ii, p. 577.

been well and truly said that Jeremiah 'stands between an outer life of universal unpopularity and an inner life of irresistible inspiration';¹ and it is this which explains his attitude to Babylon, which was the outspring of intense religious and moral conviction.

Jeremiah differs from Isaiah much as a dove mourning plaintively in the shade differs from an eagle soaring upwards towards the sun. He differs from Ezekiel, the other major prophet, much as, to vary the metaphor, plastic clay in the hands of a potter differs from solid marble under the tools of a sculptor. It is thus that various characters and natures are used by God for the execution of His plans.

3. *Character and style of the book.*

The literary character of the book naturally varies very much according to its subject. (1) One of its most remarkable features are the discourses of a hortatory or denunciatory character. In some, especially of the earlier prophecies, there is an earnest and tender pleading of the cause of God and righteousness (see ii—iv. 4); in others the style becomes measured, and the tone more didactic, and that especially where the prophet has caught the spirit, and in some cases the phraseology of Deuteronomy² (xi. 1-8; xvi. 10-13; xxv. 1-14, &c.). Not unfrequently Jeremiah's prophetic passion pours forth torrents of eloquent denunciation which, while terrible in their severity, are instinct with a natural tenderness of feeling which he could seldom quite suppress (see esp. v—xxii). (2) Equally characteristic of the book are the frequent lamentations which remind us in their style of the book which goes by that name, e.g. vii. 29; ix. 10-11, 17-21; xiii. 18-19, 20-27; xx. 7-10; xxv. 34-38, &c. (3) Still more striking are the prayers and meditations, to which attention has been already called (x. 23-25; xi. 20; xii. 1-6; xiv. 7-xv; xx. 7-18). (4) In addition to these we have very vivid predictive pictures or descriptions, written more or less in what had become the typical prophetic style, and often very poetical in form. These we find especially in the book of prophecies against the nations (Book II). In the prophecies concerning the Jews (Book I) the poetical effect is sometimes weakened, because the declaration of judgement is combined with a description of the sin which called it forth. While the style of the book is generally as artless as it is spontaneous, it is yet allied in a measure both to Deuteronomy and to the earlier prophets, and has several points of contact with Ezekiel, Job (see especially xx. 14-18), and many of the Psalms, and thus the book may be said to mark a transition in

¹ Moulton, *Modern Reader's Bible, Jeremiah*, p. xiv.

² 'That great scholar Zunz has pointed out sixty-six passages of Deuteronomy echoes of which occur, as it seems, in eighty-six passages of Jeremiah' (Cheyne, *Jeremiah*, p. 81).

the history of Jewish literature. If therefore it lacks as a whole the artistic finish of Amos, the magnificence of Isaiah, the descriptive force of Nahum, and the 'laboured completeness' of Ezekiel, it is because it discloses to us, more than any other of the prophetic writings, a prophet's inmost thoughts just as they come welling up within him. And, as Dr. Driver truly says, 'the thoughts of an emotional spirit resent all artificial restraint'.

4. Analysis of the contents of the book.

Few books of the Old Testament are more difficult to analyse, and it must be candidly confessed that the analysis here offered is partly tentative, and to some degree also artificial. An exact division of the book into several parts, if such were possible, would be too complicated to be of much practical value. If we omit the prophecies against the nations (xlvi—li)¹, the present arrangement of Jeremiah is to a very considerable degree chronological². It begins with the call of Jeremiah in the thirteenth year of Josiah (ch. i). After several undated prophecies, there occurs in xi. 1-8 a prophecy evidently connected with the finding of the law in the eighteenth year of Josiah. After another series of undated prophecies up to ch. xx, we have in ch. xxi and xxiv prophecies belonging to Zedekiah's reign³. After two disconnected prophecies from Jehoiakim's reign (xxv and xxvi), we have another long series (ch. xxvii—xxxiv), belonging also to Zedekiah's reign, arranged nearly in their chronological order. After another prophecy (xxxv), undated, but probably belonging to about the middle of Jehoiakim's reign (see ver. 11), and a narrative connected with the fourth and fifth years of his reign (xxxvi), we have in xxxvii—xliv a continued record of the siege of Jerusalem and the events that followed, so far as Jeremiah was concerned. These are followed by a supplementary prophecy concerning Baruch (xlv), and, after the prophecies against the nations, an historical appendix (li. 59—lii) closes the book.

Thus the most serious breaks in chronology are in the chapters xxv, xxvi, and xxxv, xxxvi. The latter are easily accounted for on the otherwise probable assumption that ch. xxxv—xliv are taken out of a biography of Jeremiah in the relative order in which they were found. The position of ch. xlv suggests that this was written by Baruch, who naturally placed at the end the prophecy which only concerned himself. It may fairly be assumed from their position that the undated prophecies (ii—x, xi. 9—xix) belong, in the main, the one to the pre-reformation period of Josiah, the

¹ See Introduction to Isaiah, vol. i, p. 60, note a.

² It should, however, be remembered that the book has probably undergone several re-editions.

³ i.e. in their present form; xxii, e.g., certainly reproduces earlier prophecies.

other to the early days of Jehoiakim. A certain dislocation of order, an unconscious revision of earlier prophecies in the light of later events, are easily explained by the fact that no complete collection of Jeremiah's prophecies was made, and probably none of them were written at all, before the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, and, moreover, that when Jehoiakim had burnt the roll an enlarged edition was made (xxxvi. 1 and 32). The contents of the second edition were probably much the same as ch. i—xx, to which it is natural to suppose that additions were made from time to time. A further revision and completion of the book in its present form, uniting Jeremiah's prophecies and his life, must obviously have been the work of a much later date.

5. *The authorship of the book.*

That, apart from the biographical sections¹, the greater portion of the book was written, or at least dictated, by Jeremiah may be readily admitted. We should certainly, however, except x. 1—16, which shews close affinities with the Deutero-Isaiah, and lii, another and better recension of 2 Kings xxiv. 18 ff, and probably a few other short passages referred to in the notes. With reference to the prophecies against the nations, xlvi—li, more difficulties have been felt. The ode against Babylon, l—li. 58, is in its present form undoubtedly later, and betrays a spirit of hatred against that power which Jeremiah could hardly have felt, though he fully realised that the time must come when Babylon too would fall. Of the other prophecies, xlvi—xlix, it may be said that though the style differs generally from what we most frequently find in the book, and though their inter-relation with very similar prophecies often involves difficult critical problems, yet the style, as already pointed out, is by no means confined to these prophecies, and, moreover, that we constantly meet in them phrases and modes of expression distinctly characteristic of Jeremiah². Possibly the true solution lies in the supposition that in this collection Jeremiah's prophecies were rather freely treated by a later reviser.

6. *The different arrangement of the book in the Septuagint.*

A word should be added about the arrangement of this book in the LXX. The chief difference is that the LXX places the prophecies against the nations (xlvi—li) in bulk immediately after xxv. 13, where the words 'all that is written in this book' certainly seem to refer to them. But the whole section, xxv. 12—14, is for this very reason probably an editorial insertion. In any case the arrangement is unsuitable, as all the prophecies against the nations could hardly

¹ These, as we have seen, were probably the work of Baruch.

² See especially xlvi. 5, 26; xlviii. 2, 6, 12; xlix. 2, 4, 13, 19, 24, 29, 32, 37.

have been made and published at this early date. The LXX also differs in the order in which the several prophecies against the nations are given: Elam, Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Edom, Ammon, Kedar, Damascus, Moab; whereas in the Hebrew text we have Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Elam, Babylon. Thus the LXX puts first the greater and more distant enemies, among which it places Babylon; whereas the Hebrew arrangement is more geographical. Here again the order of the LXX is evidently the later.

7. Jeremiah's religious teaching.

The great theological value of Jeremiah lies in the fact that he gave an impulse to those spiritual conceptions which appeared first definitely in the Book of Deuteronomy. Hosea and Isaiah had insisted that outward religious observances were useless, and even detestable to God, without a righteous life. Jeremiah further contended that conduct and character are themselves the outcome of an inward religious principle. There was to be an inward circumcision of the heart, which God would recognise as the only true circumcision (iv. 4; ix. 25, 26). Thus the great Kingdom of Messiah would be signalled by a New Covenant based, not upon a law written on tables, but in the heart (xxx. 31-34). In this kingdom outside nations would be lovingly welcomed (iii. 17; iv. 2; xxxiii. 9), a promise which suggests that there is a latent relationship between all nations and Jehovah (xvi. 19). Jeremiah therefore, more than any other of the prophets, justified their description as 'the spiritual destroyers of old Israel'.¹ For he most of all stands out as the harbinger of that new order which was to succeed to the old that was 'nigh unto vanishing away': an order which was to know no national or material restriction, but was to be characterised by the universal indwelling of the Spirit of God. If Hosea in teaching the love of God anticipated the chief tenet of Christian theology, Jeremiah may be said, in his insistence on an inward and spiritual motive, to have predicted the fundamental truth of Christian ethics (cf. Heb. viii. 8-13; x. 15-18).

¹ See *The Hebrew Prophets*, by R. L. Ottley, p. 61.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

Introductory. i.

The Superscription. i. 1-3.

1 THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the
priests that were in Anathoth^a in the land of Benjamin :
2 to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of
Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thir-
3 teenth year of his reign. It came ^b also in the days of
Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the
end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah,
king of Judah ; unto the carrying away of Jerusalem
captive in the fifth month.

THE PROPHET'S CALL (626 B. C.). i. 4-10.

4 Now the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee,
And before thou camest forth out of the womb I
sanctified thee ;
I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations.
6 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD ! behold, I cannot speak :
7 for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say
not, I am a child :

For ¹ to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, ¹ Or, on *whatsoever*
And whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt *errand*
speak.

8 Be not afraid because of them :
For I am with thee to deliver thee,
Saith the LORD.

9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my
mouth ^c ; and the LORD said unto me,
Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth :

^a According to Josh. xxi. 18 (belonging to the Post-Exilic document, P.) this was one of the cities assigned to the Aaronic priests, a tradition arising probably from the fact that several priests had lived there (e.g. Abiathar, 1 Kings ii. 26). See Introd., p. 39.

^b Ver. 3 is certainly a later interpolation. Probably verses 1 and 2 were originally merely a title to ch. i, but were adapted and expanded so as to form a superscription for the whole book.

^c A sign that the words are given by God. Like other prophets, Jeremiah makes no attempt to distinguish between the divine and human elements of his message.

See, I have this day set thee over the nations 10
 And over the kingdoms,
 To pluck up and to break down,
 And to destroy and to overthrow ;
 To build, and to plant.

TWO PREMONITORY VISIONS. i. 11-16.

*The rod of an almond tree, shewing that God's word is
 sure. i. 11-12.*

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 11
 Jeremiah, what seest thou ?

†¹ Heb.
shaked.

And I said, I see a rod of ¹ an almond tree.

Then said the LORD unto me, 12
 Thou hast well seen :

†² Heb.
shoked.

For I ² watch over ^a my word to perform it.

*The seething caldron^b, shewing the terrible judgement
 which is coming from the north. i. 13-16.*

And the word of the LORD came unto me the second 13
 time, saying,

What seest thou ?

And I said, I see a seething caldron ^b ;

And the face thereof is from the north ^c.

Then the LORD said unto me, 14

³ Heb. *shall
 be opened.*

Out of the north evil ³ shall break forth

Upon all the inhabitants of the land.

For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms 15
 of the north, saith the LORD ;

And they shall come, and they shall set every one
 his throne

At the entering of the gates of Jerusalem,

And against all the walls thereof round about,

And against all the cities of Judah.

¹ Or, *speak
 with them
 of my
 judge-
 ments*

And I will ⁴ utter my judgements against them touching 16
 all their wickedness ; in that they have forsaken me,
 and have burned incense unto other gods, and wor-
 shipped the works of their own hands.

*N.B. An obelus (+) attached to a marginal note shews that the alternative
 rendering or reading is preferred, or calls attention to some other important point.*

^a The point of the vision lies entirely in the play on the words. See marg.
 and cf. Amos viii. 1, 2. God, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, will certainly
 perform His word. Cf. v. 6 ; xxxi. 28 ; xlv. 27.

^b Among the Bedāwin war is sometimes figured by a boiling pot (Cheyne).

^c Throughout their history trouble had generally come from the north, from the
 Syrians and Assyrians. In this case the threatened danger probably lay in a great
 invasion of Scythian hordes who, after burning and laying waste Mesopotamia,
 made their way along the coast line to Egypt. Cf. Introduction to Zephaniah,
 p. 1. See Cheyne's *Jeremiah*, p. 31, and notes on xv. 12, and Zeph. ii. 13.

*JEREMIAH MUST FEARLESSLY FULFIL HIS
DANGEROUS COMMISSION. i. 17-19.*

- 17 Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise,
And speak unto them all that I command thee :
Be not dismayed at them, lest I dismay thee before
them.
- 18 For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced
city,
And an iron pillar, and brasen walls,
Against the whole land,
Against the kings of Judah,
Against the princes thereof,
Against the priests thereof,
And against the people of the land.
- 19 And they shall fight against thee ;
But they shall not prevail against thee :
For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

Book II. ii—xlv.

**PROPHECIES CHIEFLY CONCERNING THE
JEWS.**

Part II. ii—xi. 8.

MAINLY PROPHECIES PREVIOUS TO, OR CONTEMPORARY WITH, THE REFORMATION OF JOSIAH.
(626-620 B.C.).

**I. THE IDOLATRY OF JUDAH ^a AND ITS
PUNISHMENT. ii—iv.**

(1) *ISRAEL'S GREAT APOSTASY. ii—iii. 5.*

An ideal picture of Israel's pristine piety and happiness.
ii. 1-3.

- 2 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
2 Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus
saith the LORD,

I remember ¹ for thee the kindness of thy youth, ¹ Or, *con-*
The love of thine espousals ^b ; *cerning*
How thou wentest after me in the wilderness,
In a land that was not sown.

- 3 Israel ^c was holiness unto the LORD,
The firstfruits of his increase :

^a 'Throughout these oracles the young Jeremiah has on his heart the unprotected villages and the interests of all the townships of Judah,' and not Jerusalem only (G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, ii. 234).

^b Israel's early devotion to Jehovah is compared to the love of a bride for her husband. This is a close parallel to Hos. ii. 14-15.

^c Israel appears to be generally used by Jeremiah of the whole nation, but with special reference to Judah. See, however, iii. 6-11.

All that devour him shall be held guilty ;
Evil shall come upon them,

Saith the LORD.

The ingratitude and unnatural folly of idol-worship.

ii. 4-13.

Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and 4
all the families of the house of Israel : thus saith the 5
LORD, What unrighteousness have your fathers found
in me, that they are gone far from me, and have
walked after vanity, and are become vain ? Neither 6
said they, Where is the LORD that brought us up out
of the land of Egypt ; that led us through the wilder-
ness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a
† ¹ Or, deep
darkness
land of drought and of ¹ the shadow of death, through
a land that none passed through, and where no man
dwelt ? And I brought you into a plentiful land, to eat 7
the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof ; but when
ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage
an abomination. The priests said not, Where is the 8
LORD ? and they that handle the law knew me not :
the ² rulers also transgressed against me, and the
prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things
that do not profit.

² Heb.
shepherds.

Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, 9
And with your children's children will I plead.
For pass over to the isles of Kittim ^a, and see ; 10
And send unto Kedar ^b, and consider diligently :
And see if there hath been such a thing.
Hath a nation changed *their* gods, which yet are no 11
gods ?
But my people have changed their glory for that
which doth not profit.
Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, 12
And be horribly afraid,
Be ye very desolate,

Saith the LORD.

For my people have committed two evils ; they have 13
forsaken me the fountain of living waters ^c, and hewed
them out cisterns ^d, broken cisterns, that can hold no
water.

^a Probably Cyprus.

^b A pastoral people in Arabia, but the name gradually became extended to the Bedāwin generally and practically meant 'the East'. Kittim and Kedar stand therefore practically for West and East.

^c i. e. running water as distinct from stagnant. Tanks for rain-water are very common in the East, and are frequently seen cracked and so worthless.

^d Idols which could not help them in their trouble.

Israel's calamities are entirely the results of forsaking his God. ii. 14-17.

- 14 Is Israel a servant?
Is he a homeborn slave^a?
Why is he become a prey?
- 15 The young lions have roared upon him,
And ¹yelled:
And they have made his land waste;
His cities are burned up,
Without inhabitant.
- 16 The children also of Noph^b and Tahpanhes^c
Have ²broken the crown of thy head^d.
- 17 Hast thou not procured this unto thyself,
In that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God,
When he led thee by the way?

¹ Heb.
given out
their voice.†

² Or, fed
on†

The impiety shewn in seeking foreign alliances. ii. 18-19.

- 18 And now what hast thou to do in the way to Egypt,
To drink the waters of ³Shihor^e?
Or what hast thou to do in the way to Assyria,
To drink the waters of ⁴the River?
- 19 Thine own wickedness shall correct thee,
And thy backslidings shall reprove thee:
Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and
a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God,
and that my fear is not in thee,
Saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

³ That is,
the Nile.†

⁴ That is,
the Eu-
phrates.†

The hopeless obstinacy involved in Israel's idolatry.
ii. 20-25.

- 20 For of old time ⁵I have broken thy yoke, and burst⁵ Or, thou
thy bands;
hast

^a As a slave, especially as one born in the house, he might have expected kindness from his master Jehovah. The allusions which follow have generally been referred to the destruction of the Northern Kingdom (see Driver), but the language seems rather to suggest either a more recent event to which we have no clue, so far as Egypt is concerned, or a coming disaster.

^b Memphis, the capital of Lower Egypt. The temple of Apis was here, the most splendid of ancient Egypt. See note on xli. 19.

^c Daphne, an eastern frontier town of Lower Egypt. The Pharaohs had a palace here. See xliii. 9.

^d A double metaphor. The Egyptian armies are compared to shepherds grazing, and so consuming the produce of the land. Cf. xxii. 22. This again is compared to cutting hair. Cf. Isa. vii. 20. 'Baldness was regarded as ignominious' (Gesenius). Cf. 2 Kings ii. 23.

^e This name, meaning black, given to the Nile because of the alluvial soil with which the river was frequently charged, suggests something distasteful and injurious. An alliance with Egypt was at that time a more probable danger than one with Assyria. See ver. 36.

Another
reading is,
transgress.

And thou saidst, I will not ¹serve ;
For upon every high hill and under every green tree
Thou didst bow thyself, playing the harlot ^a.
Yet I had planted thee a noble vine ^b, 21
Wholly a right seed :
How then art thou turned into the degenerate plant
of a strange vine unto me ?
For though thou wash thee with lye ^c, 22
And take thee much soap,
Yet thine iniquity is marked before me,
Saith the Lord God.

How canst thou say, I am not defiled,
I have not gone after the Baalim ^d ? 23
See thy way in the valley ^e,
Know what thou hast done :
Thou art a swift ²dromedary traversing her ways ^f :
A wild ass used to the wilderness, 24
That snuffeth up the wind in her desire ;
In her occasion who can turn her away ?
All they that seek her will not weary themselves ^g ;
In her month they shall find her.
Withhold thy foot from being unshod ^h, 25
And thy throat from thirst :
But thou saidst, There is no hope : no ;
For I have loved strangers,
And after them will I go.

+ ² Or,
*young
camel*

The futility of idols in time of trouble. ii. 26-28.

As the thief is ashamed when he is found, 26
So is the house of Israel ashamed ⁱ ;
They, their kings, their princes,
And their priests, and their prophets ;

^a Idolatry is conceived of as faithlessness to Israel's true spouse, Jehovah. Cf. Hos. ii. 2-13.

^b Cf. Isa. v. 1-7.

^c Probably what we should call kitchen soda, a vegetable alkali obtained from ashes, which is still an important article of Bedāwin trade in Palestine, especially at Nablūs. Israel's iniquity cannot by any means be purged away.

^d Images of local Baals ; by Jeremiah's time the term was used of any heathen god.

^e Perhaps a reference to the worship of Moloch in the valley of Hinnom just outside Jerusalem.

^f Going about in an uneven course as her whim takes her.

^g Nobody attempts the useless task of trying to catch her in the season of her passion.

^h Do not continue to wear out your sandals and to suffer thirst in this mad rush after heathen gods. So Keil, &c.

ⁱ i.e. when divinely sent calamity comes.

- 27 Which say to a stock, Thou art my father ;
 And to a stone, Thou hast ¹ brought ² me forth :
 For they have turned their back unto me, and not
 their face :
 But in the time of their trouble they will say,
 Arise, and save us ^a.
 28 But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee ?
 let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy
 trouble : for according to the number of thy cities are
 thy gods, O Judah ^b.

*Israel's obduracy and complacency in spite of all her
 sins is incorrigible. ii. 29-37.*

- 29 Wherefore will ye plead ^c with me ?
 Ye all have transgressed against me, saith the LORD.
 30 In vain have I smitten your children ;
 They received no ³ correction :
 Your own sword hath devoured your prophets ^d,
 Like a destroying lion.
 31 O generation, see ye the word of the LORD.
 Have I been a wilderness unto Israel ?
 Or a land of ⁴ thick darkness ^e ?
 Wherefore say my people, We are broken loose ^f ;
 We will come no more unto thee ?
 32 Can a maid forget her ornaments,
 Or a bride her attire ^g ?
 Yet my people have forgotten me
 Days without number.
 33 How trimmest thou thy way to seek love ^h !
 Therefore even the wicked women hast thou taught
 thy ways ⁱ.
 34 Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of
 the innocent poor ^k :

¹ Or,
begotten me
² Another
 reading is,
us.

³ Or, *in-*
struction

⁴ Or, *dark-*
ness from
Jah

^a These words are addressed to Jehovah.
^b Idolatrous shrines seemed to be in every township and village. Cf. iii. 2.
^c Contend at law, i.e. argue against the justice of Jehovah's doings.
^d As recorded in 1 Kings xviii. 4 ; xix. 10 ; 2 Chron. xxiv. 21 ff. But such treatment was exceptional. See vol. i, Gen. Introd., p. xi.
^e From his home at Anathoth Jeremiah would see almost daily the heavy haze of the wilderness. Cf. iv. 11, 23, 26, and see Introd., p. 39.
^f Is the love of God a thing so dark and dreary that to be rid of it is freedom ?
^g If a girl loves even her bridal dress, how much more might Israel have been expected to be faithful to her Bridegroom !
^h What a good road thou takest ! (ironical).
ⁱ Better, ' Therefore hast thou taught thy ways misdeeds ' (Keil) ; i.e. trained thy life to evil.
^k The old prophetic complaint of the rich oppressing the poor, a fault amounting to robbery and even murder. Cf. especially Hos. vi. 9.

Or, *Thou
didst not
find them*

^a See Ex.

xvii. 2.

Some
ancient
authorities
have, *every
oak*.

¹ I have not found it at ^a the place of breaking in.

But upon ^a all these^a.

Yet thou saidst, I am innocent ;

35

Surely his anger is turned away from me.

Behold, I will enter into judgement with thee,

Because thou sayest, I have not sinned.

Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way ?

Thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt ^b also,

As thou wast ashamed of Assyria.

From him also shalt thou go forth,

37

With thine hands upon thine head ^c :

For the LORD hath rejected thy confidences ^d,

And thou shalt not prosper in them.

*Israel's faithlessness and deplorable obstinacy are all
but past forgiveness. iii. 1-5.*

⁴ ¹ Heb.
Saying.

⁵ See Deut.
xxiv. 1-4.

[†] Or, *and
thinkest
thou to
return &c.?*

⁴ They say ^e, ⁵ If a man put away his wife, and she go ³
from him, and become another man's, shall he return
unto her again? ^f shall not that land be greatly
polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many
lovers ; ⁶ yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

Lift up thine eyes unto the bare heights ^g, and ²
see ;

Where hast thou not been lien with?

By the ways hast thou sat for them,

As an Arabian in the wilderness ^h ;

And thou hast polluted the land

With thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

Therefore the showers have been withholden,

3

And there hath been no latter rain ⁱ ;

^a Lange renders 'in the place of burglary'. Had it been only attacks on housebreakers the crime would have been excusable. Cf. Exod. xxii. 2. But the words are barely intelligible as they stand ; the text is probably corrupt.

^b See note on ver. 18. Cf. xxxvii. 7-8 ; 2 Chron. xxviii. 21.

^c As a sign of mourning. Cf. 2 Sam. xiii. 19. 'So Israel would retrace her steps, disgraced and discarded' (*Speaker's Commentary*).

^d The objects of thy confidence.

^e Strictly speaking this is a distinct prophecy, which probably began with the phrase 'The word of the LORD came unto me, saying' (cf. ii. 1). The paragraph is, according to the interpretation of the last clause of ver. 1, either a serious call to repentance, or an utterance almost of despair.

^f See Deut. xxiv. 4.

^g The hills were favourite places for altars. Cf. iii. 23.

^h On the look-out for booty.

ⁱ The heavy showers of March and April. In Palestine the early rain falls about the end of October, and the whole of the winter is more or less a rainy season.

Yet thou hadst a whore's forehead,
Thou refusedst to be ashamed.

4 Wilt thou not from this time cry ^a unto me,
My father, thou art the ¹ guide of my youth?

¹ Or, *com-
panion*

5 Will he retain *his anger* for ever?
Will he keep it to the end?

Behold, thou ² hast spoken and hast done evil ² Or, *hast
spoken thus,
but hast
done &c.* [†]
things ^b,
And hast ³ had thy way ^c.

³ Heb.
been able.

(2) *THE NATION IS ENTREATED TO REPENT.*

iii. 6—iv. 4.

The lesson of Samaria's punishment is lost on Judah.

iii. 6—II.

6 Moreover the LORD said unto me in the days of
Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which back-
sliding Israel ^d hath done? she is gone up upon
every high mountain and under every green tree, and

7 there hath played the harlot ^e. ⁴ And I said after she ¹ Or, *And
I said,
After she*
had done all these things, ⁵ She will return unto me; *hath done
all these*

8 Judah saw it. And ⁶ I saw, when, for this very cause *things, she*
that backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had ^{&c.} [†]

put her away and given her a bill of divorcement, ⁵ Or, *Let
her return
unto me*
yet treacherous Judah her sister feared not; but she

9 also went and played the harlot. And it came to pass
through the lightness of her whoredom ^f, that the land ⁶ Some
was polluted, and she committed adultery with stones *ancient
authorities
have, she
saw that,
for &c.*

10 and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous
sister Judah hath not returned unto me with her whole

11 heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD. And the LORD
said unto me, Backsliding Israel hath shewn herself
more righteous than treacherous Judah ^g.

^a Or, *hast not thou cried?*

^b Your deeds have contradicted your words (marg).

^c Such repentance as they shewed came very late after a long course of sin.

^d Here, of course, the Northern Kingdom as distinguished from Judah. See
note on ii. 3.

^e See note on ii. 20.

^f The meaning is uncertain; we probably should explain 'the tumult of her
religious orgies'.

^g Judah had gone even farther in idolatrous practices (cf. Ezek. xvi. 51, 52).
Moreover, she had the unheeded warning of Israel's punishment.

Offer of pardon and restoration to Samaria. iii. 12-15.

Go, and proclaim these words toward the north^a, and ¹² say,

Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD ;

¹ Heb.
cause my
counse-
nance to fall
upon you.

I will not ¹ look in anger upon you :

For I am merciful, saith the LORD,

I will not keep *anger* for ever.

Only ² acknowledge thine iniquity, ¹³

That thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God,

And hast scattered thy ways to the strangers

Under every green tree,

And ye have not obeyed my voice,

Saith the LORD.

Return, O backsliding children, saith the LORD ; ¹⁴

For I am a husband unto you ^b :

And I will take you one of a city, and two of a family ^c,

And I will bring you to Zion :

And I will give you shepherds according to mine ¹⁵ heart,

Which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding^d.

The new Jerusalem would not need even the most sacred symbol of religious worship. iii. 16.

And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and ¹⁶ increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD,

They shall say no more, The ark ^e of the covenant of the LORD ;

Neither shall it come to mind :

Neither shall they remember it ;

Neither shall they ³ visit it ;

Neither ⁴ shall *that* be done any more.

³ Or, miss
+ ¹ Or, shall
it be made
any more

Jerusalem, the home of a united Israel and Judah, will be a theocratic centre for all nations. iii. 17-18.

At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of ¹⁷ the LORD ; and all the nations shall be gathered unto

^a The land of Israel's exile. Cf. 2 Kings xv. 29 ; xvi. 7-9. This rhetorical appeal to Israel to repent is indirectly an appeal to Judah. Cf. Ezek. xvi. 53.

^b Jehovah is her true husband, the worship of idols is adultery.

^c i. e. the few who listen to the call.

^d Unlike the many godless kings whom they had chosen for themselves.

^e By a curious irony of interpretation this passage seems to be the source of the tradition in the Apocrypha that Jeremiah hid the ark at Nebuchadrezzar's destruction of the Temple, 2 Esdras x. 22 ; 2 Macc. ii. 7.

it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of
 18 their evil heart. In those days the house of Judah shall walk ¹ with the house of Israel, and they shall ¹ Or, to come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers ^a.

Hitherto Israel had disappointed Jehovah's fondest hopes.

iii. 19-21.

19 But I said, How ² shall I put thee among the children, ² Or, would
 And give thee a pleasant land, ... na-
³ A goodly heritage of the hosts of the nations? tions! †
 And I said, ⁴ Ye shall call me My father; ³ Or, The
 And shall not turn away from following me ^b. goodliest
 20 Surely as a wife treacherously ^c departeth from her heritage
 husband, of the
 So have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of nations †
 Israel, ⁴ Another
 reading is,
 Thou shalt
 ... and
 shalt not
 &c.
 Saith the LORD.

21 A voice is heard upon the bare heights ^d,
 The weeping *and* the supplications of the children
 of Israel;
 For that they have perverted their way,
 They have forgotten the LORD their God.

Jehovah invites repentance. iii. 22 a.

22 Return, ye backsliding children,
 I will heal your backslidings.

The suppliants' response—a confession of shame.

iii. 22 b-25.

Behold, we are come unto thee;
 For thou art the LORD our God.
 23 Truly in vain is *the help that is looked for* from
 the hills ^e,
 The ⁵ tumult on the mountains: ⁵ Or,
 Truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of *noisy*
 Israel. *throng* †

^a Ver. 18 does not accord very well with ver. 14, which implies a return of but a remnant of Israel alone, and may have been added at a revision of this prophecy when the overthrow of Judah was threatened.

^b I used to think how delightful it would be to treat Israel as a beloved and loving son.

^c i.e. faithlessly.

^d Where their sanctuaries were. Cf. iii. 2.

^e i.e. from the gods of their hill sanctuaries.

¹ Heb.
shame.
See ch. xi.
13.

But the ¹ shameful thing ^a hath devoured the labour ²⁴
of our fathers from our youth ;
Their flocks and their herds,
Their sons and their daughters.
Let us lie down in our shame,
And let our confusion cover us ^b : 25

For we have sinned against the LORD our God, we
and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day :
and we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our
God.

*Jehovah replies: This repentance, if sincere, would make
the nations glory in Jehovah and avert the
threatened doom. iv. 1-4.*

⁺ Or, if
thou wilt
put . . . and
wilt not
wander,
and wilt
swear . . .
then shall
the nations
&c.
or, then
shalt thou
swear . . .
and the
nations &c.

If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, unto me ⁴
shalt thou return ^c : and ² if thou wilt put away thine
abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not be
removed ; and thou shalt swear, As the LORD liveth, ²
in truth, in judgement, and in righteousness ; and the
nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him
shall they glory.

For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and ³
to Jerusalem ^d,

Break up your fallow ground,
And sow not among thorns ^e.

Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, 4
And take away the foreskins of your heart ^f,

Ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem :

Lest my fury go forth like fire,

And burn that none can quench it,

Because of the evil of your doings.

^a Altars to Baalim. Cf. xi. 13 ; Hos. ix. 10. Their goods, even their very children, had been sacrificed to their gods.

^b We are dismayed as we recall this shameful idolatry.

^c 'Unto me . . . return' ; better, 'wilt return unto me', continuing as in margin.

^d Here, as generally, Jeremiah mentions Judah before Jerusalem, perhaps because, before the reforms of Josiah, Jerusalem did not hold religiously the unique position which it afterwards held. The villages and townships of Judah seem equally dear to Jeremiah's heart.

^e There must be a thoroughgoing moral and religious reformation, neither hard ground to prevent the growth, nor thorns to choke the tender shoots of the new life. Cf. the Parable of the Sower.

^f A circumcision of the heart is the removal of all that is impure or defiling in the thoughts and intentions. Cf. Deut. x. 16.

(3) *THE JUDGEMENT WHICH MUST COME UPON
AN UNREPENTANT PEOPLE.* iv. 5-31.

*The panic caused by the foe approaching as a lion to
devour.* iv. 5-10.

- 5 Declare ye in Judah,
 And publish in Jerusalem ;
And say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land :
 Cry aloud and say,
 Assemble yourselves,
 And let us go into the fenced cities ^a.
- 6 Set up a standard ^b toward Zion :
 Flee for safety, stay not :
For I will bring evil from the north,
 And a great destruction.
- 7 A lion is gone up from his thicket,
 And a destroyer of nations ;
He is on his way, he is gone forth from his
 place ;
 To make thy land desolate,
 That thy cities be laid waste,
 Without inhabitant.
- 8 For this gird you with sackcloth,
 Lament and howl :
For the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned
 back from us.
- 9 And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the
LORD,
 That the heart of the king shall perish,
 And the heart of the princes ;
 And the priests shall be astonished,
 And the prophets shall wonder ^c.
- 10 Then said I, Ah, Lord God ! surely thou hast greatly
deceived ^d this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall
have peace ; whereas the sword reacheth unto the
soul.

^a i.e. for protection.

^b Not a military standard but a signal to summon the people to take refuge.

^c Those who should have advised them and protected them are all dazed by fear.

^d i.e. by the false prophets. Cf. xiv. 13 ; xxiii. 17. But as it seems unlikely that Jeremiah should have attributed this deception to God, some critics have suggested reading for 'And I said'—'and they say' ; but cf. 1 Kings xxii. 20-23. Moreover, this change of person is very characteristic of Jeremiah.

The enemy advances like an overwhelming tempest.

iv. 11-14.

At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem,

A hot wind^a from the bare heights in the wilderness

Toward the daughter of my people,

Not to fan, nor to cleanse ;

† Or, *A wind too strong for this*

¹ A full wind from these shall come for me : 12

Now will I also ² utter judgements against them^b.

Behold, he shall come up as clouds, 13

And his chariots *shall be* as the whirlwind :

² See ch. i. 16.

His horses are swifter than eagles^c.

Woe unto us ! for we are spoiled.

O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved^d. How long shall thine evil thoughts lodge within thee ?

The city is attacked as by a band of keepers.

iv. 15-18.

³ Or, *there is a voice of one that declareth so.*

For ³ a voice declareth from Dan, 15

And publisheth evil from the hills of Ephraim^e :

Make ye mention to the nations ; 16

Behold, publish against Jerusalem^f,

That watchers come from a far country,

And give out their voice against the cities of Judah.

As keepers^g of a field are they against her round about ; 17

Because she hath been rebellious against me,

Saith the LORD.

Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee : this is thy wickedness ; ⁴ for it is bitter,

† Or, *surely*

⁴ for it reacheth unto thine heart.

^a The sirocco, literally 'the east' ; but it was used of all winds blowing from the desert. 'They come with a mist of fine sand, veiling the sun, scorching vegetation, and bringing languor and bitter fever to men' (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog. of the Holy land*, p. 67). See also note on ii. 31.

^b 'I (Jehovah) will plead my cause against them.'

^c The eagle was the military ensign of the Mesopotamian powers.

^d Even now repentance may ward off the coming evil.

^e Dan in the north and Mount Ephraim in the south of Israel. It means that the march of the enemy would be rapid.

^f The peoples of the world are rhetorically bidden to take note of the fate of Jerusalem.

^g The besiegers are here compared to the keepers who protected the crops and herds from robbers and beasts of prey.

The prophet's horror at the coming desolation. iv. 19-26.

- 19 My bowels, my bowels^a !
¹ I am pained at ² my very heart ;
 My heart is disquieted in me ;
 I cannot hold my peace ;
 Because ³ thou hast heard, O my soul,
 The sound of the trumpet,
 The alarm^b of war.
- 20 Destruction upon destruction is cried^c ;
 For the whole land is spoiled :
 Suddenly are my tents^d spoiled,
 And my curtains in a moment.
- 21 How long shall I see the standard,
 And hear the sound of the trumpet ?
- 22 For my people^e is foolish,
 They know me not ;
 They are sottish children,
 And they have none understanding :
 They are wise to do evil,
 But to do good they have no knowledge.
- 23 I beheld the earth,
 And, lo, it was ⁴ waste and void^f ;
 And the heavens,
 And they had no light.
- 24 I beheld the mountains,
 And, lo, they trembled,
 And all the hills⁵ moved to and fro.
- 25 I beheld, and, lo, there was no man,
 And all the birds of the heavens were fled.
- 26 I beheld, and, lo, ⁶ the fruitful field was a wilder-⁶
 ness, ^{Or, Carmel}
 And all the cities thereof were broken down^g
 At the presence of the LORD,
 And before his fierce anger.

¹ Another reading is, *I will wait patiently.*

² Heb. *the walls of my heart.* †

³ Or, as otherwise read, *my soul heareth*

⁴ See Gen. i. 2. †

⁵ Or, *moved lightly*

⁶ Or, *Carmel*

^a The bowels were believed to be the seat of pity. So frequently in N. T., as in Phil. i. 8 ; 1 John iii. 17 (A. V.).

^b i. e. the call to arms. See Glossary and note on Zeph. i. 16.

^c Cf. ' Every hour some horseman came with tidings of dismay ' (Macaulay, *Horatius*, quoted in *Preachers' Hom. Commentary*).

^d i. e. habitations. Cf. 2 Sam. xviii. 17.

^e The prophet, who has been speaking as a spectator of the calamity, now speaks as Jehovah's mouthpiece.

^f It had returned to primitive chaos. Cf. Gen. i. 2 ; Isa. xxxiv. 11.

^g Travellers in Palestine see this exemplified to-day, for in no country is the contrast between the glorious past and the miserable present so startling and sad. ' The whole land is a venerable ruin ' (Schaff).

*The whole land abandoned to a terrible judgement
which no idol can avert. iv. 27-31.*

For thus saith the LORD, 27

The whole land shall be a desolation ;

Yet will I not make a full end.

For this shall the earth mourn, 28

And the heavens above be black :

Because I have spoken it, I have purposed it,

And I have not repented,

Neither will I turn back from it.

The whole city fleeth for the noise of the horsemen 29
and bowmen ;

They go into the thickets,

And climb up upon the rocks :

Every city is forsaken,

And not a man dwelleth therein.

And thou, when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do ? 30

Though thou clothest thyself with scarlet,

Though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold,

Though thou ¹enlargest thine eyes with paint ^a,

In vain dost thou make thyself fair ^b ;

Thy lovers despise thee,

They seek thy life.

For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, 31

The anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first
child,

The voice of the daughter of Zion,

That gaspeth for breath,

That spreadeth her hands, *saying*,

Woe is me now !

For my soul fainteth before the murderers.

II. THE MORAL DISORDERS OF JUDAH CALL FOR DIVINE JUDGEMENT. v-vi.

Injustice. v. 1-6.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, 5
and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places ^c

^a Cf. 2 Kings ix. 30.

‘These with a tiring pin their eyebrows dye,

Till the full arch gives lustre to the eye

That, trembling, darts lascivious glances.’ (Juvenal, *Satire II*).

^b The city, appealing in her distress to her idol god, is compared to a harlot
dressing herself out for her paramours.

^c These were then, as now, just within the gates of the city, the usual place

thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that seeketh ¹ truth; and I will pardon ¹ Or, *faith-* her. And though they say, As the LORD liveth; ² *fulness*† surely they swear falsely.

3 O LORD, ² do not thine eyes look upon ¹ truth? ² Heb. *are not thine eyes upon.*
 Thou hast stricken them,
 But they were not grieved;
 Thou hast consumed them,
 But they have refused to receive ³ correction: ³ Or, *in-* struction†
 They have made their faces harder than a rock;
 They have refused to return.

4 Then I said,
 Surely these are poor: they are foolish;
 For they know not the way of the LORD,
 Nor the judgement of their God:
 5 I will get me unto the great men,
 And will speak unto them;
 For they know the way of the LORD,
 And the judgement of their God.
 But these ^a with one accord have broken the yoke,
 And burst the bands.

6 Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them,
 A wolf of the ⁴ evenings shall spoil them, ⁴ Or, *deserts*†
 A leopard shall watch over their cities,
 Every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in
 pieces:
 Because their transgressions are many,
 And their backslidings are increased.

Impurity. v. 7-10.

7 How can I pardon thee? thy children have forsaken
 me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had
⁵ fed them to the full, they committed adultery, and ⁵ Or, *ac-* according to
 assembled themselves in troops at the harlots' houses. ⁶ Or, *reading,*
 8 They were as fed horses ⁶ in the morning: every one ⁶ *made them*
 neighed after his neighbour's wife. ⁷ *swear*
 9 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: ⁸ Or, *roam-* ing at
 And shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation ⁹ *large*
 as this?

for concourse, markets, &c. See note on Amos v. 12. Cf. the well-known story of Diogenes ranging the streets of Athens with a lighted lamp, saying, 'I seek a man.'

^a i.e. the great men. The uneducated and educated classes alike had rebelled against the Divine law of righteousness.

Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy ^a ;
 But make not a full end :
 Take away her branches ^b :
 For they are not the LORD'S.

10

Contemptuous optimism. v. 11-14.

For the house of Israel and the house of Judah ^c have **11**
 dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.

They have denied the LORD, **12**
 And said, It is not he ^d ;
 Neither shall evil come upon us ;
 Neither shall we see sword nor famine :
 And the prophets ^e shall become wind, **13**
 And the word is not in them :
 Thus shall it be done unto them ^f.

Wherefore thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, **14**
 Because ye speak this word,
 Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire,
 And this people wood,
 And it shall devour them ^g.

The advance of the avenging foe. v. 15-19.

Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far ^h, **15**
 O house of Israel, saith the LORD :

ⁱ Or, *an
enduring
nation*

It is ⁱ a mighty nation,
 It is an ancient nation,
 A nation whose language thou knowest not,
 Neither understandest what they say.
 Their quiver is an open sepulchre, **16**
 They are all mighty men.
 And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, **17**

^a Jeremiah rhetorically invites the enemy to the siege.

^b Shoots ; i. e. of the vine, cf. ii. 21 ; Isa. xviii. 5. The idea seems to be that while the walls are to be scaled and the shoots of the vine to be torn down, the stock is to be spared.

^c Jeremiah's point seems to be that Judah is acting now as both kingdoms have acted all along.

^d Or, 'He is not' ; i. e. there is no God (Ps. xiv. 1) to punish as is predicted.

^e These predictions are but as 'wind'. This verse is best taken as part of the speech of the optimistic God-deniers, who declared that time would shew how vain had been the presages of woe announced by the true prophets.

^f Many commentators take this as a wish—Thus may it happen to their dolorous prophets !

^g By a common figure of speech the prophet is described as himself executing the judgement which he threatens. Cf. xxiii. 29 ; Hos. vi. 5.

^h Probably the Scythians, but the passage is thought to have been subsequently altered by revisers to apply to the Chaldeans. See *Introd.*, p. 2.

Which thy sons and thy daughters should eat^a :
 They shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds :
 They shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees :
 They shall¹ beat down thy fenced cities, wherein¹ Or, im-
 thou trustest, with the sword. *poverish*

18 But even in those days, saith the LORD,
 I will not make a full end with you.

19 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Where-
 fore hath the LORD our God done all these things
 unto us ? then shalt thou say unto them, Like as ye
 have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your
 land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not
 yours.

*The obstinacy of the nation who refused to learn God's
 lessons in nature. v. 20-25.*

20 Declare ye this in the house of Jacob,
 And publish it in Judah, saying,
 21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without² un-² Heb.
 derstanding ; *heart.*

Which have eyes, and see not ;
 Which have ears, and hear not :
 22 Fear ye not me ? saith the LORD :
 Will ye not tremble at my presence,
 Which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea,
³ by a perpetual decree,

That it cannot pass it ? ³ Or, an
 And though the waves thereof toss themselves, *everlasting*
 Yet can they not prevail ; *ordinance,*
 Though they roar, *which it*
 Yet can they not pass over it. *cannot pass*

23 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart ;
 24 they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in
 their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that
 giveth rain, both the former and the latter^b, in its
 season ; that reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of
 25 the harvest. Your iniquities have turned away these
 things, and your sins have withholden good from
 you^c.

^a Or probably ' They shall eat up ' i. e. devour with the sword ' thy sons and
 thy daughters.' This suits the parallelism better.

^b See note on iii. 3.

^c Scarcity and drought have been sent as a punishment.

Unjust and deceitful gains. v. 26-29.

For among my people are found wicked men : 26
 They watch, as fowlers lie in wait ;
 They set a trap,
 They catch men ^a.
 As a cage is full of birds, 27
 So are their houses full of deceit ^b ;
 Therefore they are become great,
 And waxen rich.
 They are waxen fat, they shine : 28
 Yea, they overpass in deeds of wickedness :
 They plead not the cause, the cause of the fatherless,
 That they should prosper ;
 And the right of the needy do they not judge ^c.
 Shall I not visit for these things ? saith the LORD : 29
 Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as
 this ?

Prophets, priests, and people are alike guilty. v. 30-31.

¹ Or,
*Astonish-
 ment and
 horror*

† ² Or, at
 their hands

¹ A wonderful and horrible thing is come to pass in 30
 the land ;
 The prophets prophesy falsely, 31
 And the priests bear rule ² by their means ^d ;
 And my people love to have it so :
 And what will ye do in the end thereof ?

The invading army storms the capital. vi. 1-7.

Flee for safety, ye children of Benjamin, 6
 Out of the midst of Jerusalem,
 And blow the trumpet in Tekoa,
 And raise up a signal on Beth-haccherem ^e :
 For evil looketh forth from the north,

^a ' Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began,
 A mighty hunter—and his prey was man.'—POPE.

^b i. e. ill-gotten wealth.

^c The very people who might help the poor and helpless abuse their power to rob them.

^d i. e. under their guidance. The priests rule as the false prophets direct. ' When Amos and Isaiah attacked the priesthood, they still felt that there remained the prophets on whom the nation could fall back. But when Jeremiah mourned for Israel he felt that there was no reserve in Judah ' (Stanley, *The Jewish Church*, ii. 441).

^e The prophet bids the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the doomed city, especially his own countrymen the Benjamites, flee and rally in places to the south of it. Tekoa was a hill 10 miles from Jerusalem, and Beth-haccherem between the two. The latter was, perhaps, the hill afterwards known as Herodium, the place of Herod's castle and grave, now called the Frank Mountain. There is a play on the name Tekoa comparable to those in Mic. i. 10-16.

And a great destruction.

- 2 The comely and delicate one,
The daughter of Zion,
Will I cut off.

- 3 Shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her ;
They shall pitch their tents against her round about ;
They shall feed every one in his place.

- 4 ¹ Prepare ye war against her ^a ; ¹ Heb.
Sanctify. †
Arise, and let us go up at noon.

Woe unto us ^b ! for the day declineth,
For the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

- 5 Arise, and let us go up by night,
And let us destroy her palaces.

- 6 For thus hath the LORD of hosts said ^c,
Hew ye down ² trees,
And cast up a mount against Jerusalem :
This is the city to be visited ;
She is wholly oppression in the midst of her.

² Or, as
otherwise
read, *her*
trees

- 7 As a well ³ casteth forth ^d her waters,
So she ³ casteth forth her wickedness :
Violence and spoil is heard in her ;
Before me continually is sickness and wounds.

³ Or,
keepeth
fresh

*The prophet warns them to repent even now before it be
too late. vi. 8.*

- 8 Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem,
Lest my soul be alienated from thee ;
Lest I make thee a desolation,
A land not inhabited.

*Since the warning is repudiated, God will pour out his
fury upon all. vi. 9-12.*

- 9 Thus saith the LORD of hosts,
They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as
a vine :

^a A rhetorical invitation to the enemy. War was initiated by sacrificial rites, now specially appropriate as the enemy were engaged in a Divine retribution. Cf. Deut. xx. 2 ; Ezek. xxi. 21-23 ; Isa. xiii. 3.

^b The enemy encourage each other to attack, and chafe under delay.

^c Jehovah Himself orders the assault. Cf. Isa. xxix. 3 ; 2 Kings xix. 32.

^d It is not easy to choose between this rendering and the margin. The former is the interpretation of Rabbinical writers and is adopted by Keil. On purely philological grounds the margin is preferable, but the metaphor is very strange and forced. There is no natural analogy between keeping water fresh and cool and persisting in wickedness.

† ¹ Or, upon
the shoots

Turn again thine hand as a grapegatherer ¹ into the baskets ^a.

To whom shall I speak and testify, that they may ¹⁰ hear?

Behold, their ear is uncircumcised,
And they cannot hearken ^b:

Behold, the word of the LORD is become unto them
a reproach ^c;

They have no delight in it.

Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD: 11

I am weary with holding in:

Pour it out upon the children in the street,

And upon the assembly of young men together:

For even the husband with the wife shall be taken,

The aged with him that is full of days.

And their houses shall be turned unto others, 12

Their fields and their wives together:

For I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants
of the land,

Saith the LORD.

† ² Or,
breach

: Another
reading is,
the
daughter of
my people,
as in ch. viii.
11, 21.

† ³ Or,
They shall
be put to
shame be-
cause they
have com-
mitted
abomina-
tion: yea,
they are not
c-c.

† ⁵ Or,
stumble

*Universal covetousness encouraged by priest and prophet
is the root of the evil. vi. 13-15.*

For from the least of them even unto the greatest of 13

them every one is given to covetousness; and from the
prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely ^d.

They have healed also the ² hurt of ³ my people lightly, 14

saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. ⁴ Were 15

they ashamed when they had committed abomination?

Yea, they were not at all ashamed ^e, neither could they

blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall:

at the time that I visit them they shall ⁵ be cast down,

Saith the LORD.

^a Gather what may still be left on the smaller shoots. The direction is conceived of as addressed by God to the enemy to bid him do the work thoroughly, as a gleaner of grapes would go again carefully over the branches, lest any clusters should be missed.

^b Jeremiah despairs of any attention being paid to this warning

^c They ridicule and despise it.

^d Priests and prophets received money for offerings and teaching, a practice obviously liable to abuse. See Amos ii. 8; Hos. iv. 8; Mic. iii. 11; Jer. vii. 11; xxiii. 11.

^e As yet they felt no shame, but shame will come upon them.

*The warnings of the true prophets having been in vain,
the people must bear the consequences.* vi. 16-21.

- 16 Thus saith the LORD,
Stand ye in the ways and see,
And ask for the old paths^a,
Where is the good way^b, and walk therein,
And ye shall find rest for your souls :
But they said, We will not walk *therein*.
- 17 And I set watchmen^c over you, *saying*,
Hearken to the sound of the trumpet^d ;
But they said, We will not hearken.
- 18 Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O con-
gregation, what is among them.
- 19 Hear, O earth : behold, I will bring evil
upon this people,
Even the fruit of their thoughts,
Because they have not hearkened unto my
words ;
And as for my law, they have rejected it.
- 20 To what purpose cometh there to me frank-
incense from Sheba^e,
And the sweet¹ cane from a far country ? ^{1 Or, *calamus*}
Your burnt offerings are not acceptable,
Nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me.
- 21 Therefore thus saith the LORD,
Behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before this
people :
And the fathers and the sons together shall
stumble against them ;
The neighbour and his friend shall perish.

The terror inspired by the cruel foe^f. vi. 22-26.

- 22 Thus saith the LORD,
Behold, a people cometh from the north country ;

^a Jeremiah implies that the idolatry and the unrighteousness of which he has been complaining were an innovation. Cf. ii. 1-3.

^b Or, 'the way to the good,' which latter may be used either in a moral or a material sense, of virtue or prosperity.

^c i. e. prophets. See note on Hos. ix. 8 and Hab. ii. 1.

^d i. e. God's warning voice, a metaphor especially appropriate as referring to threatened invasion.

^e i. e. South Arabia, famous for its frankincense. See Exod. xxx. 23 ; Ezek. xxvii. 19. It was probably brought from India, the 'far country'. When dried and pulverised it is richly fragrant, according to Dioscorides.

^f Verses 22-24 are adapted to the invasion of Babylon in l. 41-43.

And a great nation shall be stirred up from the
uttermost parts of the earth ^a.

They lay hold on bow and spear ; 23

They are cruel, and have no mercy ;

Their voice roareth like the sea,

And they ride upon horses ;

Every one set in array,

As a man to the battle,

Against thee, O daughter of Zion.

We have heard the fame thereof ; 24

Our hands wax feeble :

Anguish hath taken hold of us,

And pangs as of a woman in travail.

Go not forth into the field, 25

Nor walk by the way ;

For *there is* the sword of the enemy,

And terror on every side ^b.

O daughter of my people, gird thee with sackcloth, 26

And wallow thyself in ashes ^c :

Make thee mourning, as for an only son,

Most bitter lamentation ;

For the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us.

The prophet baffled in his attempt to refine his people.

vi. 27-30.

+¹ Or, *trier* I have made thee a ¹ tower ^d and a fortress among my 27
people ; that thou mayest know and try their way.

They are all grievous revolters, going about with slan- 28
ders ; they are brass and iron : they all of them deal cor-

+ Or, *are* ruptly. The bellows ² blow fiercely ; the lead is con- 29
burned sumed of the fire : in vain do they go on refining ; for

the wicked are not plucked away ^e. Refuse silver shall 30
men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.

^a See Introd., p. 2.

^b A favourite phrase with Jeremiah ; used especially to denote the terror which would be caused by the Chaldeans. See xx. 3, 4, 10 ; xlv. 5 ; xlix. 29. Cf. Ps. xxxi. 13.

^c Indicating a much more unbearable grief than that denoted by merely putting ashes upon the head. Cf. Job ii. 8. The Hebrew for 'wallow' means, probably, to sprinkle oneself.

^d One who tests metals.

^e The complete process of smelting and refining is carried out to the full, and even more ; but in vain, the people are not refined by adversity.

III. THE FOLLY OF TRUSTING IN THE TEMPLE AND NEGLECTING GOD ^a.

A SERMON DELIVERED AT THE GATE OF THE TEMPLE, vii. 1-28.

Jehovah's protection must be secured by moral obedience.
vii. 1-7.

7 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD,
2 saying, Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and
proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of
the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates ^b
3 to worship the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts,
the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings,
4 and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye
not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD,
the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, are
5 these ^c. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and
your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgement be-
6 tween a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the
stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not
innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other
7 gods to your own hurt: then will I cause you to dwell
in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers,
from of old even for evermore.

*The uselessness of the worship of Jehovah if combined
with heathen worship and immorality.* vii. 8-11.

8 Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.
9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear
falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after
10 other gods whom ye have not known, and come and
stand before me in this house, ¹ which is called by my ¹ Heb.
name, and say, We are delivered ^d; that ye may do all ^{whereupon}
11 these abominations? Is this house, which is called by ^{my name}
^{is called.}

^a That this prophecy belongs to a later period is shewn by the constant occurrence of Deuteronomic phrases (see especially verses 6-7), and by the fact that a shorter recension of it in a biographical form occurs in ch. xxvi, where it is distinctly referred to the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, 608 B.C.

^b 'The periodical gatherings in the Temple of all the men of Judah, which are enjoined by Deuteronomy, had become by the end of Josiah's reign so firmly established that they survived through the reign of his very different minded successor; and Jeremiah used these gatherings in order to reach the national conscience' (G. A. Smith's *Jerusalem*, ii. 238). Cf. xxxvi. 6.

^c i.e. the buildings, to which Jeremiah seems to be pointing. The Temple was regarded by the people as a sort of fetish, a feeling no doubt increased by the recently discovered Deuteronomic law which insisted on the centralisation of worship in Jerusalem.

^d Safe, and so may practice idolatry with impunity.

my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes^a? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith the LORD.

The Temple is threatened with Shiloh's fate. vii. 12-15.

But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, 12 where I caused my name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it^b for the wickedness of my people Israel. And now, because ye have done all these 13 works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not: therefore will I do unto 14 the house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will 15 cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.

Intercession for an idolatrous people useless. vii. 16-20.

Therefore pray not thou for this people^c, neither lift 16 up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee. Seest thou not what 17 they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers 18 kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes^d to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. Do they provoke me to anger? 19 saith the LORD; do they not *provoke* themselves, to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith 20 the Lord God: Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

God has from the first required obedience rather than sacrifice. vii. 21-23.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 21 Add your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat

^a Regarding the Temple as a sort of guarantee of Divine protection you, robbers that you are, are treating it as a mere meeting-place. I, Jehovah, know what you are and what this really means. See note on vi. 13.

^b An allusion probably to the destruction of the Temple at Shiloh by the Philistines, of which sanctuary no more is heard after their victory (1 Sam. iv).

^c These words are addressed to Jeremiah by Jehovah. Cf. xi. 14.

^d The Hebrew for 'cakes' here is the same as the Assyrian for the cakes offered to Ishtar, queen of heaven, in Babylonia. See note on xlv. 19.

22 ye flesh^a. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings
 23 or sacrifices^b: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Harken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.

But Israel has never regarded the prophet's teaching, and will not do so now. vii. 24-28.

24 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in *their own* counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early
 26 and sending them: yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff: they did worse than their fathers.

27 And thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call
 28 unto them; but they will not answer thee. And thou shalt say unto them, This is the nation that hath not hearkened to the voice of the LORD their God, nor¹ Or, correction
 received¹ instruction: ² truth is perished, and is cut² Or, faithfulness[†]
 off from their mouth.

IV. A PROPHECY AGAINST THE IDOLATROUS RITES INTRODUCED BY MANASSEH. vii. 29—viii. 3.

The nation called upon to bewail its impending doom.
 vii. 29.

29 Cut off³ thine hair, *O Jerusalem*, and cast it away, ³ Heb. thy crown.
 And take up a lamentation on the bare heights^c;
 For the LORD hath rejected and forsaken
 The generation of his wrath.

^a Ironical. Go on with your sacrifices, but that is not what God requires. Cf. Amos iv. 4-5.

^b The great mass of ceremonial law (the so-called Priestly Code), comprising a large part of Exodus, the whole of Leviticus, and the greater part of Numbers, was not put forth in its present form until long after Jeremiah's time. Cf. Amos v. 25, where see note.

^c See note on iii. 21.

Their great sin—the desecration of the Temple and the hideous rites of Molech. vii. 30–31.

For the children of Judah have done that which is 30 evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house^a which is called by my name, to defile it. And they have built the high 31 places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire^b; which I commanded not, neither came it into my¹ mind^c.

^a Heb. heart.

Their punishment – a day of gloom and misery, the destruction of the living and the desecration of the dead. vii. 32—viii. 3.

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, 32 that it shall no more be called Topheth^d, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of Slaughter: for they shall bury in Topheth, ²till there be no place to bury.

⁺ Or, because there shall be no place else

And the carcases of this people shall be meat for 33 the fowls of the heaven,

And for the beasts of the earth;

And none shall fray^e them away.

Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, 34

And from the streets of Jerusalem,

The voice of mirth and the voice of gladness,

The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride:

For the land shall become a waste.

At that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the 8 bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves^f: and they shall 2 spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all

^a Manasseh had put up a graven image for Asherah and altars to all the host of heaven in the courts of the Temple. See 2 Kings xxi. 5–7. Cf. xxxii. 34.

^b The child-sacrifices to Molech, the worst of Manasseh's abominations, were put an end to by Josiah, who defiled the valley of Hinnom (the prototype of hell, the Gehenna of N. T.), 2 Kings xxiii. 10. See note on xxxii. 35.

^c An ironical meiosis, a thing which I never ordered or even contemplated.

^d See note on Isa. xxx. 33. The pyre-altar, which gave it its name, would be gone, and it would be remembered only as the scene of an awful carnage. In fact, the fate here threatened was averted, or at least delayed, by the reforms of Josiah.

^e i. e. frighten. See Glossary.

^f An enemy might act in this way for the sake of robbing the graves of valuable articles buried with the dead.

the host of heaven^a, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the
 3 earth. And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them^b, saith the LORD of hosts.

V. THE AWFUL CONSEQUENCES OF PERSISTENCE IN WRONG-DOING^c.

viii. 4—ix. 22. (See also x. 17—25.)

The obstinate refusal to repent. viii. 4—7.

4 Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD: Shall men fall, and not rise up again? shall
 5 one turn away, and not return? Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to
 6 return. I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright^d: no man repenteth him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one¹ turneth to his¹ Or,
 course, as a horse that rusheth headlong in the battle^e. *turneth away in his course*
 7 Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming^f; but my people know not the² ordinance of the LORD.
² Or, judgement

The conceit and shameless iniquity of their false teachers would be put to shame. viii. 8—13.

8 How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us? But, behold, the false pen of the³ Or,
 9 scribes hath³ wrought falsely^g. The wise men are^{made of it falsehood} †

^a Another Babylonian cult introduced by Manasseh, and put down by Josiah. 2 Kings xxi. 3; xxiii. 4—5. See note on vii. 30.

^b This is very unlike the tone afterwards adopted by Jeremiah with respect to the Babylonian exiles. Cf. e.g. xxiv.

^c Some commentators refer this passage to the prospect of a Babylonian invasion following upon the battle of Carchemish in the fourth year of Jehoia-kim (605 B.C.). Jeremiah may have added it to his earlier prophecies, on dictating the second roll (xxxvi. 32).

^d I, Jehovah, listened patiently to know whether they would take heed and utter words of penitence.

^e Cf. Prov. xxi. 31; Job xxxix. 25; Nah. iii. 2.

^f The migratory birds obey God's natural law. Cf. Isa. i. 3.

^g What they wrote to instruct the people was not really the will of God, and so they falsified the Divine instruction ('law').

ashamed, they are dismayed and taken : lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD : and what manner of wisdom is in them ? Therefore will I give their wives 10 unto others, and their fields to them that shall possess them : for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

† See ch.
vi. 14, 15.

¹ And they have healed the hurt of the daughter of 11 my people lightly, saying, Peace, peace : when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had 12 committed abomination ? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush : therefore shall they fall among them that fall : in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. 13 I will utterly consume them, saith the LORD : there shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade ^a ; and ² the things that I have given them shall pass away from them ^b.

† - Or,
have appointed
them those
that shall
pass over
them

Israel flees for refuge at the approach of the invading army. viii. 14-17.

Why do we sit still ?

14

Assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities,

And let us ³ be silent there :

For the LORD our God hath ⁴ put us to silence,

And given us water of ⁵ gall to drink,

Because we have sinned against the LORD ^c.

We looked for peace,

15

But no good came ;

And for a time of healing,

And behold dismay !

The snorting of his horses is heard from Dan ^d :

16

At the sound of the neighing of his strong ones

The whole land trembleth ;

For they are come, and have devoured the land

And all that is in it ;

^a God's good gifts would be withdrawn as a judgement. But it is better, perhaps, with Keil, &c., to take the words as a metaphorical description of Israel's moral condition. 'No grapes on the vine! nor figs on the fig tree!'

^b This translated as in margin refers to the invading army. viii. 13—ix. 23 is one of the lessons read at the Jewish 'Black Fast' 9th of Ab, which commemorates the destruction of the first and second Jewish Temples.

^c So they say to each other when they hear the enemies approach, and now too late realise the hand of God.

^d So terrible is the snorting that it is heard from the northernmost limits of the country.

† Or,
perish

†⁴ Or,
caused us
to perish

†⁵ See Deut.
xxix. 18.

The city
And those that dwell therein.

- 17 For, behold, I will send serpents,
¹ Basilisks, among you, ¹ Or *Adders*
Which will not be charmed;
And they shall bite you,
Saith the LORD.

The prophet's distress at Judah's punishment.

viii. 18—ix. 1.

- 18 Oh that I could comfort myself against sorrow!
My heart is faint within me.
19 Behold, the voice of the cry of the daughter of
my people
² From a land that is very far off: ² Or,
Because of
Is not the LORD in Zion ^a?
Is not her King in her?

Why have they provoked me to anger
With their graven images, and with strange
vanities?

- 20 The harvest is past,
The ³ summer is ended,
And we are not saved ^b. ³ Or, *in-*
gathering
of summer
fruits
21 For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I
hurt ^c;

- I am ⁴ black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. ⁴ Or,
mourning
22 Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there ^d? ⁵ Or,
healing
Why then is not the ⁵ health of the daughter of
my people ⁶ recovered? ⁶ Or,
perfected
Heb. gone
up.

- 9 Oh that my head were waters,
And mine eyes a fountain of tears,
That I might weep day and night
For the slain of the daughter of my people!

^a The captives, who have now reached the land of their exile, ask whether Jehovah is not present to save His people from this disaster. Jehovah gives the answer in the form of a question.

^b A cry of despair. The time when help might have come is past in vain, like a harvest with no crops garnered.

^c The prophet himself here takes up once more and continues the strain of lamentation.

^d Gilead, a celebrated emporium for perfumes and medicine, was above all regions of Palestine noted for its traffic in 'balm'. Cf. Gen. xxxvii. 25 and Jer. xlv. 11. (Both Pompey and Titus carried some back to Rome with them.) So Jerusalem, God's holy city, was, Jeremiah implies, the place above all others where God might be expected to heal and help.

His horror at the deceitfulness which had merited it.

ix. 2-6.

[Ch. ix. 1
in Heb.]

¹ Or, *Oh
that I were
in the
wilderness,
in &c.*

¹ Oh that I had in the wilderness ^a

2

A lodging place ^b of wayfaring men ;

That I might leave my people,

And go from them !

For they be all adulterers,

An assembly of treacherous men.

And they bend their tongue *as it were* their bow ³
for falsehood ^c ;

And they are grown strong in the land, but not for
² truth ^d :

† Or,
faithful-
ness

For they proceed from evil to evil,

And they know not me,

Saith the LORD.

Take ye heed every one of his neighbour,

4

And trust ye not in any brother :

For every brother will utterly supplant ^e,

And every neighbour will go about with slanders.

† Or, *mock*

And they will ³ deceive every one his neighbour,

5

And will not speak the truth :

They have taught their tongue to speak lies ;

They weary themselves to commit iniquity ^f.

Thine ^g habitation is in the midst of deceit ;

6

Through deceit they refuse to know me,

Saith the LORD.

God vindicates the ruin of His land. ix. 7-9.

Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts,

7

Behold, I will melt them, and try them ^h ;

For how *else* should I do,

Because of the daughter of my people ⁱ ?

^a To pass thus from pain in the contemplation of the nation's punishment to pain at the thought of their present sin is very characteristic of Jeremiah.

^b A caravanserai or khan, a large square building erected in places far removed from towns, either at public expense or by voluntary offerings. Jeremiah ' was, by his own nature and inclination, the prophet of the desert, longing for a lodge in some vast wilderness, that he might leave his people, and avoid the sight of their crimes ' (Stanley, *Jewish Church*, ii. 443).

^c Their lies are deliberate and premeditated. Their tongue is a bow of lies.

^d They are mighty men of valour, but not in the cause of faithfulness. Cf. Ps. xii. 4 ; Isa. v. 22.

^e The root-word of Jacob, to whose deceitful treatment of his brother there is here probably an allusion.

^f Their lies and iniquity are a studied and laborious art.

^g Here Jehovah, into whose mouth the language of the prophet had passed imperceptibly in ver. 3, addresses Jeremiah.

^h The allusion is to the smelting and subsequent testing of metal. Cf. vi. 29.

ⁱ Just because she is so, therefore she must be refined by chastisement. Cf. Amos iii. 2.

- 8 Their tongue is a deadly arrow ;
 It speaketh deceit :
 One speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his
 mouth,
 But in his heart he layeth wait for him.

9 Shall I not visit them for these things ? saith the LORD :
 Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this ?

*The prophet, nevertheless, is pained at the thought of the
 approaching disaster. ix. 10.*

- 10 For the mountains will I^a take up a weeping and
 wailing,
 And for the pastures of the wilderness a lamentation,
 Because they are burned up,
 So that none passeth through ;
 Neither can men hear the voice of the cattle ;
 Both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled,
 They are gone.

*The teacher who is wise should understand the
 reason of God's judgements. ix. 11-12.*

- 11 And I will make Jerusalem heaps,
 A dwelling place of jackals ;
 And I will make the cities of Judah a desolation,
 Without inhabitant.

- 12 Who is the wise man,
 That may understand this ?
 And *who is* he to whom the mouth of the LORD
 hath spoken,
 That he may declare it^b ?
 Wherefore is the land perished and burned up
 like a wilderness,
 So that none passeth through ?

*In this case they are a punishment for Judah's dis-
 obedience and idolatry. ix. 13-16.*

- 13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my
 law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my
 14 voice, neither walked therein ; but have walked after
 the stubbornness of their own heart, and after the
 15 Baalim, which their fathers taught them : therefore

^a This beautiful lamentation, so characteristic of Jeremiah in his most sympathetic moods, is parenthetical, the speaker in the next verse being again Jehovah.

^b Jeremiah is bidden to realise that his sympathy is misplaced, for the nation deserved its punishment.

†¹ See
ch. viii. 14.

thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,
Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with worm-
wood, and give them water of ¹ gall to drink. I will ¹⁶
scatter them also among the nations, whom neither they
nor their fathers have known: and I will send the
sword after them, till I have consumed them ^a.

A dirge over Judah's fall. ix. 17-22.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, 17

Consider ye, and call for the mourning women,
that they may come ^b;

And send for the cunning women, that they
may come;

And let them make haste, 18

And take up a wailing for us,

That our eyes may run down with tears,

And our eyelids gush out with waters.

For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, 19

How are we spoiled!

We are greatly confounded,

Because we have forsaken the land ^c,

Because ² they have cast down our dwellings.

² Or, *our
dwellings
have cast
us out*

Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women, 20

And let your ear receive the word of his mouth,

And teach your daughters wailing,

And every one her neighbour lamentation ^d.

For death is come up into our windows, 21

It is entered into our palaces;

To cut off the children from without,

And the young men from the streets.

Speak, Thus saith the LORD, 22

The carcases of men shall fall as dung upon the
open field,

And as the handful after the harvestman,

And none shall gather *them* ^e.

^a i. e. pursue them with the sword in the land of their exile until they are utterly destroyed. Cf. Lev. xxvi. 33. This is again a very different conception of the exile from that which he adopted later.

^b Hired mourners cunning in dirges to lead the wailing. The custom still exists in Egypt and other lands of the Levant.

^c i. e. have been compelled to leave our homes.

^d The women are all to be prepared with dirges, because of the deaths not of grown men only, fighting in the field, but of young men and even of children in the streets and in their very houses.

^e The reaper in the harvest-field cuts his 'handfuls' with a sickle, letting them drop for the gatherer to bind into sheaves; but no gatherer comes, and they are left unharvested.

VI. TWO SHORT PROPHETIC SAYINGS DIS-
CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER AND
THE CONTEXT. ix. 23-26.

(1) *Not earthly greatness, but the knowledge of God is
what He delights in.* ix. 23-24.

23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in
his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his
24 might, let not the rich man glory in his riches : but
let him that glorieth glory in this, that he under-
standeth, and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which
exercise lovingkindness, judgement, and righteousness,
in the earth : for in these things I delight,
Saith the LORD.

(2) *All the uncircumcised in heart must expect chastise-
ment.* ix. 25-26.

25 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will
punish all them which are circumcised in *their* un-
26 circumcision ^a; Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the
children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that have the
corners of *their hair* polled ^b, that dwell in the wilder-
ness : for all the nations are uncircumcised, and all
the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.

* * * *

PROPHECIES DIRECTED AGAINST THE
FOLLY OF IDOL-WORSHIP ^c. x. 1-16.

(1) *The absurdity of worshipping man-made images.*
x. 1-5.

10 Hear ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you,
2 O house of Israel : thus saith the LORD, Learn not

^a i. e. circumcised literally, but not spiritually. Cf. Deut. x. 16, xxx. 6; Ezek. xlv. 7; Rom. ii. 28-29. This is an emphatic way of saying that Judah was no more really circumcised, in the prophet's sense of the word, than the surrounding peoples, and must expect the same punishment.

^b It was customary among some of the tribes of the Arabian desert to have the hair cut from off the temples and forehead. Cf. xlix. 32. It was probably connected with some heathen practice, and therefore forbidden by the law. See Lev. xix. 27. Long locks, which hang down at each ear, are therefore worn by many Jews. The Semites and others made hair offerings to the dead as a sign of union with the departed, the hair being regarded as part of the man's self. Cf. Achilles laying his hair in the hand of the dead Patroclus.

^c This section, so unlike the usual style of Jeremiah, reflects very strikingly the thought and treatment of the Deutero-Isaiah, and is evidently a post-exilic insertion. It consists of two distinct parts : (1) a somewhat tame and prosaic summary of the Deutero-Isaiah's teaching about Babylonian idols ; (2) a poem contrasting Jehovah and the idols, still in the vein of the Deutero-Isaiah, but

¹ Heb.
statues.

² Or, it is
but a tree
which one
cutteth

³ Or,
*pillar in a
garden of
cucumbers*
See Baruch
vi. 70.

the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven^a; for the nations are dismayed at them. For the ¹customs of the peoples are vanity: ³for ²one cutteth a tree out of the forest^b, the work of the hands of the workman with the axe. They deck it ⁴with silver and with gold^c; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are like ⁵a ³palm tree, of turned work^d, and speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good.

(2) *A hymn contrasting the wisdom and power of Jehovah with the impotent stupidity of the idol-worshippers.*

x. 6-16.

There is none like unto thee, O LORD; 6

Thou art great, and thy name is great in might.

Who would not fear thee, O King of the nations? 7

⁴ Or, *it
beseemeth
thee.*

For ⁴to thee doth it appertain^e:

Forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations,

And in all their royal estate,

There is none like unto thee.

⁵ Or,
*through
one thing*

But they are ⁵together brutish and foolish: 8

⁶ Or, *It is a
doctrine of
vanities*

⁶The instruction of idols, it is but a stock.

⁷ Accord-
ing to some
ancient
versions,
Ophir.

There is silver beaten into plates^f which is brought ⁹from Tarshish^g,

And gold from ⁷Uphaz^h,

The work of the artificer and of the hands of the goldsmith;

Blue and purpleⁱ for their clothing;

with more originality and with echoes also of Job. The last half (verses 12-16) occurs again as li. 15-19 where it is probably again an interpolation. :

^a i. e. be not alarmed at heavenly portents. It is probably an allusion to Chaldean astrology, which professed to read in sidereal phenomena predictions concerning nations and individuals.

^b Cf. Isa. xlv. 12-14; xl. 19-20; xli. 7.

^c See note on Hab. ii. 19.

^d lit. either 'a palm-tree of turned work' (Exod. xxv. 31) or 'a palm-tree (i. e. pillar) of a cucumber-garden' (Isa. i. 8). Many commentators think that Baruch vi. 70 is an imitation of this verse. The pillar, perhaps an image of a god used as a scarecrow, could do nothing to defend the garden from robbers.

^e i. e. such reverence is Thy prerogative.

^f See note on Hab. ii. 19.

^g Probably Tartessus in Spain. See note on Isa. ii. 16.

^h Probably a dialectic variety (Keil), or a corruption, of Ophir (LXX), a district celebrated for its gold, the locality of which is uncertain. See 1 Kings ix. 28.

ⁱ These colours, obtained from Mediterranean shell-fish, were used by kings and the wealthy. Cf. Judges viii. 26; Mark xv. 17; Luke xvi. 19.

They are all the work of cunning men.

- 10 But the LORD is ¹ the true God ;
He is the living God, and an everlasting king :
At his wrath the earth trembleth,
And the nations are not able to abide his indignation.

¹ Or, *God in truth*

* * * *

- 11 ² Thus shall ye say unto them ^a, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, ³ these shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.

² This verse is in Aramaic. †
³ Or, *they shall . . . under these heavens* †

* * * *

- 12 ^b He hath made the earth by his power,
He hath established the world by his wisdom,
And by his understanding hath he stretched out the heavens :

- 13 ⁴ When he uttereth his voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens,
And he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth ;
He maketh lightnings for the rain,
And bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures ^c.

⁴ Or, *At the sound of his giving an abundance of waters . . . when he causeth &c.*
or, *He causeth &c.*

- 14 Every man ⁵ is become brutish *and is* without knowledge ;
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven image :
For his molten image is falsehood,
And there is no breath in them.

⁵ Or, *is too brutish to know*

- 15 They are vanity, a work of ⁶ delusion :
In the time of their visitation they shall perish.

⁶ Or, *mockery*

- 16 The portion of Jacob is not like these ;
For he is the former of all things ;
And Israel is the tribe of his inheritance :
The LORD of hosts is his name.

^a This verse is certainly an interpolation, as it obviously breaks the context between ver. 10 and 12, and is written in the Aramaic language. This last fact makes it likely that the leaflet from which it is taken (x. 1-16), like the Deutero-Isaiah, originated in Babylon.

^b Verses 12-16 are repeated again as li. 15-19, where they are probably an interpolation.

^c Cf. Ps. cxxxv. 7. The idea is that the winds were stored in chambers and let loose at Jehovah's will. Cf. the classical cave of Aeolus.

VII. SUBJECT OF SECTION V (viii. 4--ix. 22)
CONTINUED. x. 17-25.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem are bidden to flee^a.

x. 17-18.

†¹ Or, *thy bundle from the ground*

Gather up¹ thy wares^b out of the land, 17

² O thou that abidest in the siege.

² Or, *O inhabitant* (Heb. *inhabitantress*)
of the fortress

For thus saith the LORD, 18

Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time,

And will distress them, that they may³ feel it.

³ Heb. *find*.

Jerusalem bewails the fate of her home and her children.

x. 19-20.

Woe is me for my hurt ! 19

My wound is grievous :

†¹ Or, *sickness*

But I said, Truly this is *my*⁴ grief,

And I must bear it.

My tent is spoiled, and all my cords are broken : 20

My children are gone forth of me, and they are not :

There is none to stretch forth my tent any more,

And to set up my curtains^c.

The calamity is due to the stupidity of her rulers.

x. 21-22.

For the shepherds are become brutish, 21

And have not inquired of the LORD :

⁵ Or, *dealt wisely*

Therefore they have not⁵ prospered,

And all their flocks are scattered.

The voice of a rumour, 22

Behold it cometh,

And a great commotion out of the north country,

To make the cities of Judah a desolation,

A dwelling place of jackals.

Jeremiah's prayer for gentler treatment. x. 23-25.

O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in 23
himself :

It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

^a This appears to have originally followed on ix. 22.

^b Not trading goods, but a package of domestic utensils, &c. (see margin), preparatory to moving.

^c Women and children in the East are frequently to be seen taking their share in the pitching of a tent.

- 24 O LORD, correct me^a,
 But with judgement ;
 Not in thine anger,
 Lest thou ¹ bring me to nothing.
- 25 ² Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee
 not,
 And upon the families that call not on thy name :
 For they have devoured Jacob,
 Yea, they have devoured him and consumed him,
 And have laid waste his ³ habitation.

¹ Heb.
diminish
me.

² See Ps.
 lxxix. 6, 7.†

³ Or,
pasture

VIII. A PROPHECY CONNECTED WITH THE DISCOVERY OF THE DEUTERONOMIC LAW^b. xi. 1-8.

Jeremiah is commissioned to proclaim the Covenant.
 xi. 1-5.

- 11 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD,
 2 saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant^c, and
 speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants
 3 of Jerusalem ; and say thou unto them, Thus saith the
 LORD, the God of Israel: Cursed be the man that
 4 heareth not the words of this covenant^c, which I
 commanded your fathers in the day that I brought
 them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron
 furnace^d, saying, Obey my voice^e, and do them,
 according to all which I command you : so shall ye be
 5 my people, and I will be your God : that I may estab-
 lish the oath which I swear unto your fathers^f, to give
 them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this
 day. Then answered I, and said, Amen^g, O LORD.

The consequences of the people's disobedience. xi. 6-8.

- 6 And the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words
 in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem,
 saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant^c, and do
 7 them. For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in
 the day that I brought them up out of the land of
 Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting,
 8 saying, Obey my voice^e. Yet they obeyed not, nor

^a Jeremiah here identifies himself with his people.

^b The close connexion of this passage with Deuteronomy and the reference to 'this covenant' point clearly to the discovery of the law in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. See 2 Kings xxii. 8 ff.

^c Cf. Deut. xxvii. 26 ; xxix. 10-14.

^d Cf. Deut. iv. 20.

^f Cf. Deut. vii. 12.

^e Cf. Deut. xiii. 4.

^g Cf. Deut. xxvii. 14-26.

inclined their ear, but walked every one in the stubbornness of their evil heart : therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did them not.

Part II.

PROPHECIES BELONGING PROBABLY IN THE MAIN TO THE EARLY PART OF JEHOIAKIM'S REIGN, UP TO AND INCLUDING THE FOURTH YEAR (604 B.C.). xi. 9-xx.

I. AN IDOLATROUS CONSPIRACY. xi. 9-17.

The consequences of the breach of Jehovah's covenant.

xi. 9-13.

And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found⁹ among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They are turned back to the iniquities¹⁰ of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words^a; and they are gone after other gods to serve them : the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

Therefore thus saith the LORD,

11

Behold, I will bring evil upon them,
Which they shall not be able to escape ;
And they shall cry unto me,
But I will not hearken unto them.

Then shall the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of¹² Jerusalem go and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense : but they shall not save them at all in
Heb. evil. the time of their¹ trouble.

For according to the number of thy cities 13

Are thy gods, O Judah^b ;

And according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem

Have ye set up altars to the² shameful thing,

Even altars to burn incense unto Baal.

^a Heb.
shame.
See ch. iii.
24.

Intercession is useless, for a hypocritical repentance is unacceptable with God. xi. 14-17.

Therefore pray not thou for this people^c,

14

Neither lift up cry nor prayer for them :

For I will not hear them

^a The reforms of Josiah appear to have been only superficial so far as the mass of the people were concerned.

^b See note on ii. 28.

^c Cf. vii. 16 ; xiv. 11.

- In the time that they cry unto me ¹ for their ² trouble.
- 15 ³ What hath my beloved to do in mine house ^a,
 Seeing she hath wrought lewdness *with* many,
 And the holy flesh is passed from thee?
⁴ When thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.
- 16 The LORD called thy name,
 A green olive tree ^b, fair with goodly fruit ^c:
 With the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled
 fire upon it,
 And the branches of it are broken.
- 17 For the LORD of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have wrought for themselves in provoking me to anger by offering incense unto Baal.

¹ Many ancient authorities have, *in the time of.*

² Heb. *evil.*

³ The text is obscure.

The Sept.

renders

thus: *Why*

hath the

beloved

wrought

abomina-

tion in

my house?

Shall vows

and holy

flesh take

away from

thee thy

wicked-

nesses,

or shall

thou escape

by these?

⁴ Or, *when*

thine evil

cometh

II. A PLOT AGAINST JEREMIAH BY THE MEN OF ANATHOTH. xi. 18—xii. 6.

The plot revealed to Jeremiah. xi. 18—23.

- 18 And the LORD gave me knowledge of it ^d, and I knew
 19 it: then thou shewedst me their doings. But I was
 like a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter; and I
 knew not that they had devised devices against me,
saying, Let us destroy the tree with the ^e fruit thereof ^e, ⁵ Heb.
 and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that ^{bread}.
 his name may be no more remembered.
- 20 But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously,
 that triest the reins and the heart ^f, let me see thy

^a The whole of this verse is very obscure and the text uncertain. If we adopt the LXX translation (in margin), which is at least intelligible, it will mean that vows and sacrifices are unavailing if combined with wickedness. The difficulty remains that the first clause seems to imply idolatry within the precincts of the Temple, which was possible even with the worship of Jehovah. Dr. Driver combines the Massoretic text and LXX thus: 'What hath my beloved (to do) in mine house, seeing she bringeth evil devices to pass? Will vows and holy flesh remove thine evil from off thee? then mightest thou rejoice.'

^b The olive is taken as a figure of individual and national well-being. Cf. Hos. xiv. 6; Ps. lii. 8.

^c That is what she was designed by God to be, but their evil had changed His purpose.

^d Rather, 'gave me knowledge and I knew.' The insertion of 'of it' and 'it', which are not in the Hebrew text, connects these incorrectly with the last paragraph. What Jeremiah had knowledge of was the plot against himself.

^e i. e. Jeremiah and his distasteful prophecies.

^f That tests and so knows thoroughly man's inward motives and thoughts. Jehovah would judge the truth of the accusations brought against Jeremiah,

vengeance on them : for unto thee have I revealed my cause.

Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the men² of Anathoth, that seek thy life^a, saying, Thou shalt not prophesy in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand : therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts,

22

Heb.
visit upon.

Behold, I will¹ punish them :

The young men shall die by the sword ;

Their sons and their daughters shall die by famine ;

And there shall be no remnant unto them :

23

For I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth,

² Or, In the
year

² Even the year of their visitation.

He complains that treachery prospers. xii. 1-4.

Righteous art thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee : **12**

² Heb.
speak
judge-
ments.

Yet would I³ reason the cause with thee :

Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper^b ?

Wherefore are all they at ease that deal very treacherously ?

Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root : 2

They grow, yea, they bring forth fruit :

Thou art near in their mouth,

And far from their reins.

But thou, O LORD, knowest me ;

3

Thou seest me, and triest mine heart toward thee :

Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter,

^{†4} Heb.
sanctify.

And⁴ prepare them for the day of slaughter.

How long shall the land mourn,

4

And the herbs of the whole country wither^c ?

For the wickedness of them that dwell therein,

The beasts are consumed, and the birds ;

Because they said, He shall not see our latter end^d.

perhaps of treason, on the ground that he discouraged resistance. See xxi. 8-10; xxiv. 5-10; xxvii. 12-22; xxix. 9-20, &c.

^a It was perhaps jealousy for their local shrine, which Jeremiah's teaching (ii. 28; xi. 13) more or less directly attacked, that accounted for the opposition of the men of Anathoth.

^b Here, and in Habakkuk, we see the rise of a reverent scepticism when the facts of human life seemed to contradict the teaching that prosperity belonged always to the righteous and adversity to the wicked. Cf. Job xxi. 7 ff.; Ps. xxxvii.

^c This prophecy appears to have been connected with a time of drought. Cf. xiv. 2-6.

^d i. e. Look with pleasure on our fate. Cf. xi. 20. ⁴ His threatenings against us will not come to pass' (Keil).

His impatience rebuked: greater trials are in store for him. xii. 5-6.

- 5 If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses ^a? and though in a land of peace thou art secure, yet how
6 wilt thou do in the ¹pride of Jordan ^b? For even thy ¹Or, ^{swelling} brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee ^c; even they have cried aloud after thee: believe them not, though they speak ²fair words unto thee.

² Heb. *goad things.*

III. JEHOVAH'S LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE WOULD VINDICATE ITSELF IN THE END^d. xii. 7-17.

His reluctance to give up Judah to devastation. xii. 7-13.

- 7 I have forsaken mine house,
I have cast off mine heritage;
I have given the dearly beloved of my soul
Into the hand of her enemies.
8 Mine heritage is become unto me as a lion in the forest:
She hath uttered her voice against me;
Therefore I have hated her.
9 Is mine heritage unto me as a speckled^e bird of prey?
Are the birds of prey against her round about?
Go ye, assemble all the beasts of the field,
Bring them to devour.
10 Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard,
They have trodden my portion under foot,
They have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness^f.
11 They have made it a desolation;

^a If you cannot compete with foot-runners, you will not be able to do so with far swifter horses; i. e. if you cannot put up with small troubles, how will you be able to endure far more serious dangers. In the second clause 'thou art secure' introduces quite a different thought. Dr. Driver suggests the reading 'thou takest flight'.

^b i. e. the Jordan valley, probably so called because of its luxuriant growth. Its jungle seems to have been infested with lions. See xlix. 19.

^c Not only his countrymen but even his family were plotting against him.

^d This prophecy was evidently written when the land was already overrun by the conquering hordes of Chaldeans, &c. (2 Kings xxiv. 2), probably at the close of Jehoiakim's reign.

^e Birds will frequently unite to attack one that has some peculiarity in plumage, &c.

^f i. e. the steppes, where goats and even other cattle were reared.

It mourneth unto me, being desolate ;
The whole land is made desolate,
Because no man layeth it to heart.

Spoilers are come upon all the bare heights in the **12**
wilderness :

For the sword of the LORD devoureth
From the one end of the land even to the other
end of the land :
No flesh hath peace.

They have sown wheat, **13**
And have reaped thorns ;
They have put themselves to pain,
And profit nothing :

And ¹ ye shall be ashamed of your fruits,
Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

¹Or, be ye
ashamed
Or, they
shall be
ashamed

*Jehovah will punish their oppressors, but shew them
mercy if they repent. xii. 14-17.*

Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours ^a, **14**
that touch the inheritance which I have caused my
people Israel to inherit : Behold, I will pluck them
up from off their land, and will pluck up the house
of Judah from among them ^b. And it shall come to **15**
pass, after that I have plucked them up, I will return
and have compassion on them ; and I will bring them
again, every man to his heritage, and every man to
his land. And it shall come to pass, if they will **16**
diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by
my name, As the LORD liveth ; even as they taught
my people to swear by Baal ; then shall they be built
up in the midst of my people. But if they will not **17**
hear, then will I pluck up that nation, plucking up
and destroying it,

Saith the LORD.

IV. PARABLES OF THE GIRDLE AND THE WINE-JARS, AND THEIR LESSONS. **xiii.**

*A symbolical act illustrating Judah's corruption and
its consequences. xiii. 1-11.*

Thus said the LORD unto me, Go, and buy thee a **13**
linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not
in water. So I bought a girdle according to the word **2**

^a Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites (2 Kings xxiv. 2), Edomites (Ps. cxxxvii), Philistines, &c., were ever ready to harass Judah, and Nebuchadrezzar incited them to do so.

^b A reference to the Babylonian Exile, which would deliver the Jews from their hostile neighbours.

3 of the LORD, and put it upon my loins. And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, 4 saying, Take the girdle that thou hast bought, which is upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates^a, and 5 hide it there in a hole of the rock. So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me. 6 And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide 7 there. Then I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it : and, behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing.

8 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 9 Thus saith the LORD, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. 10 This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the stubbornness of their heart, and are gone after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is profitable 11 for nothing. For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD ; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory : but they would not hear.

A parable representing the people as intoxicated with the cup of God's vengeance. xiii. 12-14.

12 Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word : Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Every ¹ bottle¹ Or, jar† shall be filled with wine^b : and they shall say unto thee, Do we not know that every ¹ bottle shall be 13 filled with wine? Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit ² upon² Heb. for David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, his throne. and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunken-

^a As obviously a double journey to the Euphrates is extremely improbable, Dr. Driver suggests reading Parah (Joshua xviii. 23), a town only three miles away from Anathoth. But it is also possible that some place may have been made symbolically to signify the Euphrates. Cf. xxv. 15 ff.

^b It is probable that this utterance was made by Jeremiah when a row of jars was in view. The people are amused at an apparently sententious truism. 'Of course,' they say, 'the empty wine-jars will some day or other be filled with wine!'

ness^a. And I will dash them one against another,¹⁴
even the fathers and the sons together, saith the
LORD : I will not pity, nor spare, nor have compassion,
that I should not destroy them.

An appeal for amendment. xiii. 15-17.

Hear ye, and give ear ;
Be not proud : 15

For the LORD hath spoken.
Give glory to the LORD your God, 16

Before ¹ he cause darkness,
And before your feet stumble upon the ² dark
mountains ;

And, while ye look for light,
He turn it into ³ the shadow of death,
And make it gross darkness.

But if ye will not hear it, 17
My soul shall weep in secret for *your* pride ;
And mine eye shall weep sore,
And run down with tears,
Because the LORD's flock is taken captive.

* * * * *

*A PREDICTION OF THE CAPTURE OF THE
KING AND QUEEN-MOTHER^b.* xiii. 18-19.

Say thou^c unto the king and to the queen-mother^d, 18

†¹ Or, *Sit* ⁴ Humble yourselves, sit down :
ye down low

For your headtires are come down,

†² Or, *your* ⁵ the crown of your glory.
beautiful
crown

The cities of the South^e are shut up, 19

And there is none to open them :
Judah is carried away captive all of it ;
It is wholly carried away captive.

* * * * *

^a Drunkenness, implying reeling and falling, is in the Prophets a common figure of overthrow and disaster. Cf. especially xxv. 15 ; Isa. li. 21-23.

^b This short prophecy, which breaks the connexion of the chapter, evidently refers to the short and troubled reign of Jehoiachin, when he and his mother Nehushta were carried off by Nebuchadrezzar to Babylon. 2 Kings xxiv. 8-16. See note on xxii. 10-12.

^c Addressed by God to Jeremiah.

^d 'As the Jewish kings generally married subjects and lived in polygamy, the king's mother took precedence of his wives' (Hitzig). Cf. 1 Kings xv. 13 ; 2 Kings x. 13.

^e i. e. Negeb, a district in the south of Judah, the cities of which being blockaded, the refuge which they afforded is cut off.

A lamentation over Judah's inveterate wickedness and consequent degradation. xiii. 20-27.

- 20 Lift up ^a your eyes,
And behold them that come from the north :
Where is the flock that was given thee,
Thy beautiful flock ^b ?
- 21 ¹ What wilt thou say, when he shall set *thy* friends ¹ Or, *What*
over thee as head, *wilt thou*
Seeing thou thyself hast instructed them against *say, when*
thee ^c ? *he shall*
visit thee,
Shall not sorrows take hold of thee, *seeing*
As of a woman in travail ? *thou thyself*
hast in-
structed
them
22 And if thou say in thine heart, Wherefore are these *against*
things come upon me ? *thee, even*
For the ² greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts *thy friends*
discovered ^d, *to be head*
And thy heels suffer violence ^e. *over thee ?*
- 23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin,
Or the leopard his spots ?
Then may ye also do good, that are ³ accustomed ³ Heb.
to do evil. *taught.*
- 24 Therefore will I scatter them,
As the stubble that passeth away,
⁴ By the wind of the wilderness. ⁴ Or, *Unto*
- 25 This is thy lot,
The portion measured unto thee from me,
Saith the LORD ;
Because thou hast forgotten me,
And trusted in falsehood ^f.
- 26 Therefore will I also discover thy skirts ⁵ upon thy ⁵ Or, *before*
face,
And thy shame shall appear ^d.

^a Addressed to Jerusalem conceived of as a woman.

^b i. e. the people carried into captivity.

^c If the translation of R. V. is correct, this can only mean that the Jews would find that coquetting with foreign powers would end in having to submit to their rule ; but, apart from the awkwardness of the Hebrew text, such an argument is unlike Jeremiah's usual Philo-Chaldean attitude. Very probably we should be right in taking the marginal translation of the first part of the verse (explaining 'visit' as punish) and accounting for the difficulties of the last part as due to a corruption of the text.

^d The figure, which has reference to 'the long flowing robes worn by ladies of rank' (*Speaker's Commentary*), is an allusion to the disgrace of captivity which Jeremiah, under a very usual figure, describes as a well-merited punishment for idolatry.

^e Perhaps a euphemism for more shameful violence, or a threat of being driven forth barefoot and with violence (Keil).

^f i. e. idolatry, probably of a licentious character. Cf. x. 14.

I have seen thine abominations, 27
 Even thine adulteries, and thy neighings,
 The lewdness of thy whoredom,
 On the hills in the field ^a.
 Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem !
 Thou wilt not be made clean ;
 How long shall it yet be ?

V. A DIALOGUE BETWEEN JEREMIAH AND
 JEHOVAH CONNECTED WITH A CALAMI-
 TOUS DROUGHT. xiv—xv.

The distress of man and beast. xiv. 1-6.

The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah con- 14
 cerning the drought.

Judah mourneth, and the gates ^b thereof languish, ²
 They sit in black upon the ground ;
 And the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.
 And their nobles send their ¹ little ones ^c to the ³
 waters :

^{†1} Or,
inferiors
² Or, for
water

They come to the pits, and find no water ;
 They return with their vessels empty :
 They are ashamed and confounded,
 And cover their heads ^d.

² Or,
dismayed

Because of the ground which is ³ chapt, 4
 For that no rain hath been in the land,
 The plowmen are ashamed,
 They cover their heads.

Yea, the hind also in the field calveth, and for- ⁵
 saketh *her young*,

Because there is no grass.

And the wild asses stand on the bare heights, 6

⁴ Or, the
crocodile

They pant for air like ⁴ jackals ;
 Their eyes fail^e, because there is no herbage.

*The prophet's confession and supplication on behalf of
 the nation.* xiv. 7-9.

Though our iniquities testify against us, 7
 Work thou for thy name's sake, O LORD :

^a In the most conspicuous places they had carried on their shameless worship.

^b i. e. the cities, as frequently in Deuteronomy. See xii. 15, 17, 18, 21, &c. But 'as the gates were the usual place of concourse, the misery of the people would there shew itself most plainly' (*Speaker's Commentary*).

^c i. e. their servants (see margin).

^d As a sign of mourning. Cf. 2 Sam. xv. 30; Esther vi. 12.

^e A proof of exhaustion. Cf. Ps. lxi. 3.

For our backslidings are many ;

We have sinned against thee.

- 8 O thou hope of Israel,
The saviour thereof in the time of trouble,
Why shouldest thou be as a sojourner in the land,
And as a wayfaring man that ¹ turneth aside to ¹ Or, *spreadeth*
tarry for a night ^a ? *his tent*
- 9 Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied,
As a mighty man that cannot save ?
Yet thou, O LORD, art in the midst of us,
And we are called by thy name ;
Leave us not.

Jehovah's refusal to accept intercession. xiv. 10-12.

- 10 Thus saith the LORD unto this people,
Even so ^b have they loved to wander ;
They have not refrained their feet :
Therefore the LORD doth not accept them ;
Now will he remember their iniquity,
And visit their sins.
- 11 And the LORD said unto me, Pray not for this people ^c
for *their* good.
- 12 When they fast,
I will not hear their cry ;
And when they offer burnt offering and ² oblation, ² Or, *meal*
I will not accept them : *offering*
But I will consume them by the sword,
And by the famine,
And by the pestilence.

Jeremiah blames the prophets. xiv. 13.

- 13 Then said I,
Ah, Lord GOD ! behold, the prophets say unto
them,
Ye shall not see the sword,
Neither shall ye have famine ;
But I will give you ³ assured peace in this place ^d. ³ Heb. *peace of*
truth.

Jehovah will not accept the excuse. xiv. 14-18.

- 14 Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy
lies in my name : I sent them not, neither have I
commanded them, neither spake I unto them : they

^a Why act as a stranger or as a guest of a night, ignoring their miseries ? In the East the rights of hospitality were not refused even to a deadly enemy.

^b 'In the same degree as Jehovah has estranged Himself from His people (cf. ver. 8-9) have they estranged themselves from their God' (Graf, quoted by Keil). ^c Cf. vii. 16 ; xi. 14. ^d Cf. iv. 10.

prophesy unto you a lying vision, and divination,
and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own
heart. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the 15
prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them
not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in
this land: By sword and famine shall those prophets
be consumed. And the people to whom they pro- 16
phesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem
because of the famine and the sword; and they shall
have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their
sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wicked-
ness^a upon them. And thou shalt say this word 17
unto them^b,

Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day,
And let them not cease;
For the virgin^c daughter of my people is broken
with a great breach,
With a very grievous wound.

If I go forth into the field, 18
Then behold the slain with the sword!

And if I enter into the city,
Then behold¹ them that are sick with famine!
For both the prophet and the priest² go about³ in the
land

And have no knowledge.

The prophet prays once more for the stricken people.

xiv. 19-22.

Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? 19

Hath thy soul loathed Zion?

Why hast thou smitten us,

And there is no healing for us?

We looked for peace,

But no good came;

And for a time of healing,

And behold dismay!

⁴ Or, know We⁴ acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness, 20
And the iniquity of our fathers:

For we have sinned against thee.

⁵ Or, condemn Do not⁵ abhor us, for thy name's sake; 21

Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory:

Remember, break not thy covenant with us.

Heb. the
sicknesses
of famine.

² Or,
traffick

[†] Or, into
a land that
they know
not

^a i. e. their punishment as a just recompense for their sin.

^b The prophet is bidden to lament the coming evil, as though already present.

^c According to prophetic usage, a city which has not as yet been brought under the enemies' yoke.

- 22 Are there any among the vanities ^a of the heathen
that can cause rain?
Or can the heavens give showers?
Art not thou he, O LORD our God?
Therefore we will wait upon thee;
For thou hast ¹ made all these things.

¹ Or, *done*

Jehovah's final refusal to avert Judah's fate. xv. 1-9.

- 15 Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and
Samuel stood before me ^b, yet my mind could not be
toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and
2 let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, when
they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then
thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD: Such as
are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword,
to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to
the famine; and such as are for captivity, to captivity.
3 And I will appoint over them four ² kinds, saith the ² Heb.
LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs ^c to ³ tear, and ^{families.}
the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, ³ Heb.
^{drag.}
4 to devour and to destroy. And I will cause them to
be tossed to and fro ^d among all the kingdoms of the
earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king
of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem ^e.
5 For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem?
Or who shall bemoan thee?
Or who shall turn aside to ask of thy welfare?
6 Thou hast rejected me, saith the LORD,
Thou art gone backward.
Therefore have I stretched out my hand against
thee,
And destroyed thee;
I am weary with repenting.
7 And I have fanned them with a fan ^f in the gates
of the land ^g;

^a Can either the heathen gods or the heavenly bodies which they worship
send rain? There is a reference to the drought. See ver. 1.

^b i. e. to plead the cause of their people. Moses and Samuel were noted ex-
amples of intercessors. Cf. Exod. xxxii. 11-14; Num. xiv. 13-20; 1 Sam. vii. 9;
xii. 23; Ps. xcix. 6.

^c These scavengers of offal can be seen to this day in oriental cities.

^d Better, 'to be a terror,' as in xxiv. 9 and xxxiv. 17; i. e. a thing to make men
shudder.

^e The revival by Manasseh of Canaanitish idolatries, of Baal-worship, the rites
connected with the graven image of the Asherah, and of soothsaying, necro-
mancy, and the practice of child-sacrifice by fire. See xix. 4 and 2 Kings xxi. 3 f.

^f i. e. the winnowing fan, which blows away the unprofitable chaff; a metaphor
of judgement. Cf. Matt. iii. 12.

^g See xiv. 2.

I have bereaved *them* of children,
 I have destroyed my people ;
 They have not returned from their ways.
 Their widows are increased to me above the sand ⁸
 of the seas :

¹ Or,
*against the
 mother and
 the young
 men*

I have brought upon them ¹ against the mother ^a
 of the young men

A spoiler at noonday :

I have caused anguish and terrors to fall upon
 her suddenly.

She that hath borne seven ^b languisheth ; 9

She hath given up the ghost ;

Her sun is gone down while it was yet day ^c ;

She hath been ashamed and confounded :

And the residue of them will I deliver to the
 sword before their enemies,

Saith the LORD.

² The Vul-
 gate has,
*thy rem-
 nant shall
 be for good.*

³ Another
 reading is,
release.

⁴ Or, *I will
 intercede
 for thee
 with the
 enemy*

⁵ Or, *Can
 iron break
 iron from
 &c.*

⁶ Or, *I will
 make
 thine ene-
 mies to pass
 into &c.*

According
 to some
 ancient au-
 thorities,
[†] *I will make
 thee to serve
 thine
 enemies in
 a land &c.*
 See
 ch. xvii. 4.

*Jeremiah laments the animosity which his prophecies
 called forth. xv. 10.*

Woe is me, my mother ^d, that thou hast borne me ¹⁰
 a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole
 earth ! I have not lent on usury, neither have men
 lent to me on usury ; *yet* every one of them doth
 curse me.

*The inevitable doom would make Jeremiah's foes his
 suppliants. xv. 11-14.*

The LORD said, Verily ² I will ³ strengthen thee for ¹¹
 good ; verily ⁴ I will cause the enemy to make
 supplication unto thee in the time of evil and in the
 time of affliction. ⁵ Can one break iron, even iron ¹²
 from the north, and brass ^e ?

^f Thy substance and thy treasures will I give for a ¹³
 spoil without price, and that for all thy sins, even
 in all thy borders. And ⁶ I will make *them* to ¹⁴

^a i. e. Jerusalem. Cf. ix. 19-20 and 2 Sam. xx. 19.

^b She that was so strong and populous has none to supply the place of her
 fallen children. Cf. 1 Sam. ii. 5.

^c Some have seen in these words reference to the battle of Megiddo (2 Kings
 xxiii. 29) and an eclipse on that day (cf. Amos viii. 9), but the words are
 evidently metaphorical, meaning that her good fortune has suddenly collapsed.

^d Cf. xx. 14.

^e The Chaldean power would prove irresistible. The north had long been
 marked out as the great arsenal from which God drew forth first one weapon of
 vengeance and then another (Cheyne). See note on i. 13.

^f Verses 13 and 14 are apparently a gloss, abbreviated from xvii. 3-4, addressed
 by Jehovah to the nation.

pass^a with thine enemies into a land which thou knowest not : for a fire is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn upon you.

The prophet's final lament that he should be the messenger of woe. xv. 15-18.

- 15 O LORD, thou knowest :
Remember me, and visit me,
And avenge me of my persecutors ;
Take me not away in thy longsuffering :
Know that for thy sake I have suffered reproach.
- 16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them ^b ;
And thy words were unto me a joy and the re-
joicing of mine heart :
For I am called by thy name, O LORD God of
hosts.
- 17 I sat not in the assembly of them that make
merry, nor rejoiced :
I sat alone because of thy hand ^c ;
For thou hast filled me with indignation.
- 18 Why is my pain perpetual,
And my wound incurable,
Which refuseth to be healed ?
Wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful brook,
As waters that ¹ fail ^d ?

¹ Heb. *are*
not sure.

If the prophet would only brace himself up, God would give him strength and protection in his work.

xv. 19-21.

- 19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return ^e, then
will I bring thee again, that thou mayest stand before
me ; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile ^f,
thou shalt be as my mouth : they shall return unto thee,
20 but thou shalt not return unto them. And I will

^a The reading of LXX, 'I will make thee to serve,' as in xvii. 4, is certainly correct. The Hebrew text was probably unconsciously influenced by the supposition that the word referred to Jeremiah and his personal enemies.

^b Cf. Ezek. iii. 1-3 ; Rev. x. 10. A strong metaphor for the inward and spiritual reception of the Divine revelation. The prophet rejoiced in the thought that he was God's agent.

^c The sadness of the message restrained the prophet from cheery fellowship. So Keil. For 'hand' see Isa. viii. 11 ; Ezek. i. 3 ; xxxvii. 1.

^d Most of the brooks in Palestine dry up in the summer. Cf. Job vi. 15-20. The prophet's office had proved sadly disappointing.

^e The prophet's despondency is regarded as a real falling away, disloyal to Jehovah.

^f i. e. 'bring out all that is good in thee and cast away the bad' : a metaphor from refining the precious metals.

make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall :
and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not
prevail against thee : for I am with thee to save thee
and to deliver thee, saith the LORD. And I will ²¹
deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will
redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

VI. PREDICTIONS OF THE COMING PUNISH-
MENT OF JUDAH BY PESTILENCE AND
EXILE. xvi—xvii. 4.

*As a sign of coming trouble the prophet is to cast
himself adrift from all family and social relations.*
xvi. 1-9.

The word of the LORD came also unto me, saying, **16**

Thou shalt not take thee a wife, **2**

Neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this
place^a.

For thus saith the LORD **3**

Concerning the sons and concerning the daughters
that are born in this place,

And concerning their mothers that bare them,

And concerning their fathers that begat them in
this land :

¹ Heb. *deaths of sicknesses.* They shall die ¹ of grievous deaths ; **4**

They shall not be lamented,

Neither shall they be buried ;

They shall be as dung upon the face of the ground :
And they shall be consumed by the sword, and by
famine ;

And their carcases shall be meat for the fowls of
heaven,

And for the beasts of the earth.

For thus saith the LORD, **5**

Enter not into the house of mourning,

Neither go to lament,

Neither bemoan them ^b :

For I have taken away my peace from this people,
Saith the LORD,

Even lovingkindness and tender mercies.

^a He is not to marry and have children to share the sad fate of the people.
As this prohibition to marry would be more natural to a younger man, some
commentators refer this prophecy to the earlier part of Josiah's reign.

^b Deaths would be so frequent that there would be no time for mourning
ceremonies.

- 6 Both great and small shall die in this land :
 They shall not be buried,
 Neither shall men lament for them,
 Nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for
 them ^a :
- 7 Neither shall men ¹break *bread* for them in ¹See
 mourning ^b, Isa. lviii. 7
 To comfort them for the dead ;
 Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation
 To drink for their father or for their mother.
- 8 And thou shalt not go into the house of feasting to
 sit with them ^c,
 To eat and to drink.
- 9 For thus saith ^d the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel :
 Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place,
 Before your eyes and in your days,
 The voice of mirth and the voice of gladness,
 The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of
 the bride.

The nation's apostasy is the cause of the doom ^e.

xvi. 10-13.

- 10 And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this
 people all these words, and they shall say unto thee,
 Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great
 evil against us ? or what is our iniquity ? or what is
 our sin that we have committed against the LORD our
 11 God ? then shalt thou say unto them, Because your
 fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have
 walked after other gods, and have served them, and
 have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and
 12 have not kept my law ; and ye have done evil more
 than your fathers ; for, behold, ye walk every one
 after the stubbornness of his evil heart, so that ye
 13 hearken not unto me : therefore will I cast you forth
 out of this land into the land that ye have not known,
 neither ye nor your fathers ; and there shall ye serve

^a Prohibited by the Deuteronomic law (Deut. xiv. 1), found in the Temple (2 Kings xxii. 8) : another ground for attributing this prophecy to the Pre-Reformation period of Josiah's reign. These customs were probably there forbidden as connected with idolatry. Here they are spoken of as the common signs of mourning which would become impossible during the stress of danger and disaster.

^b A reference to the funeral feast.

^c He is not to join in festal mirth, to symbolise the time when all mirth would cease.

^d A repetition of vii. 34.

^e This passage, clearly reflecting Deut. xxix. 24-26, and 19 ; xxviii. 36, probably belongs to the time of Josiah's reformation.

¹ Or, *where* other gods day and night; ¹ for I will shew you no favour.

* * * *

*A SPLENDID RESTORATION IN STORE FOR
GOD'S PEOPLE^a. xvi. 14-15.*

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, ¹⁴
that it shall no more be said, As the LORD liveth, that
brought up the children of Israel out of the land of
Egypt; but, As the LORD liveth, that brought up the ¹⁵
children of Israel from the land of the north, and from
all the countries whither he had driven them: and
I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto
their fathers.

* * * *

A further picture of the nation's fate. xvi. 16-18.

Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, ¹⁶
And they shall fish them;
And afterward I will send for many hunters,
And they shall hunt them
From every mountain,
And from every hill,
And out of the holes of the rocks.
For mine eyes are upon all their ways: ¹⁷
They are not hid from my face,
Neither is their iniquity concealed from mine eyes.
And first^b I will recompense their iniquity and ¹⁸
their sin double^c;
² Because they have polluted my land with the car-
cases^d of their detestable things,
And have filled mine inheritance with their abomi-
nations.

² Or,
*Because they
have pol-
luted my
land: they
have filled
mine in-
heritance
with the
carcases of
their detest-
able things
and their
abomina-
tions*

*Distant nations will renounce their vain gods and
Judah shall be made to realise Jehovah's might.*

xvi. 19-21.

O LORD, my strength, and my strong hold, and my ¹⁹
refuge in the day of affliction, unto thee shall the
nations come from the ends of the earth, and shall

^a This passage is probably a gloss from xxiii. 7-8, and certainly is so if 16-18 belongs to the same prophecy as verses 10-13.

^b This word, which is not in LXX, is probably a gloss referring to the promise in verses 14-15. (So Driver.) ^c Cf. Isa. xl. 2.

^d An idol is contemptuously called a carcase, as being a lifeless man or animal. So in Lev. xxvi. 30.

say, Our fathers have inherited nought but lies, *even* vanity and things wherein there is no profit.

- 20 Shall ^a a man make unto himself gods, which yet are
21 no gods? Therefore ^b, behold, I will cause them to know, this once will I cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is Jehovah.

Judah's indelible guilt must receive condign punishment.

xvii. 1-4.

- 17 The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron ^c,
And with the point of a diamond ^d;
It is graven upon the table of their heart,
And upon the horns of ¹ your altars ^e;
2 Whilst their children remember their altars and
their ² Asherim ^f
By the green trees upon the high hills.
3 O my mountain in the field ^g,
I will give thy substance and all thy treasures for a spoil,
And thy high places ^h, because of sin,
Throughout all thy borders.
4 And thou, even of thyself ⁱ, shalt discontinue from
thine heritage that I gave thee;
And I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the
land which thou knowest not:
For ye have kindled a fire in mine anger
Which shall burn for ever.

¹ Another reading is, *their*.†

² See Ex. xxxiv. 13.

^a These words are spoken by Jehovah.

^b Because of this insult. The reference is obviously to Judah, not to the heathen.

^c The iron *stylus* used for carving letters in a hard substance.

^d The diamond was used for engraving metals.

^e God beheld the unholy blood upon their altars and would not forget.

^f This may mean, While their children remembered with longing regret, &c. But this hardly suits the context, and the meaning is very uncertain. See Keil. 'Asherim,' plural of Asherah, a sacred tree image set up by the side of Canaanitish, and probably the old Israelitish local altars ('high places'). See Exod. xxxiv. 13; Deut. xii. 3; Judg. vi. 25.

^g The mountains in the field (i. e. Jerusalem and the surrounding country), which had been the scene of their idolatry, would be spoiled by the enemy.

^h i. e. Sanctuaries, as frequently in the books of Kings.

ⁱ Perhaps 'by thine own fault', but the text is very possibly corrupt.

VII. THREE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, OF
UNCERTAIN DATE. xvii. 5-27.

(1) *JEHOVAH, AND NOT MAN OR UNCERTAIN
RICHES, IS THE TRUE HOPE OF ISRAEL.*

xvii. 5-13.

Thus saith the LORD :

Cursed ^a is the man that trusteth in man,

And maketh flesh his arm,

And whose heart departeth from the LORD.

^a Or, a
tamarisk

For he shall be like ¹ the heath in the desert ^b,

And shall not see when good cometh ;

But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilder-
ness,

A salt land and not inhabited ^c.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD,

[†] Heb.
trust.

And whose ² hope the LORD is.

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters,

And that spreadeth out his roots by the river,

² According
to another
reading, *see*.

And shall not ³ fear when heat cometh,

But his leaf shall be green ;

And shall not be careful ^d in the year of drought,

Neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

The heart is deceitful above all things,

And it is desperately sick :

Who can know it ?

I the LORD search the heart,

I try the reins,

Even to give every man according to his ways,

According to the fruit of his doings.

⁴ Or, *sitteth*
on eggs
which she
hath not
laid

As the partridge ⁴ that gathereth *young*

Which she hath not brought forth ^e,

^a It is probably upon this passage (verses 5-8) that Ps. i is based, but the figure here is more complete, as giving the antithesis between the trees on the barren and on the fertile soil.

^b The solitary fruitless juniper in an arid desert.

^c The description may have been suggested by the salt-encrusted trees, &c., which lie cast up on the shores of the Dead Sea, and which form so characteristic a feature of the landscape. See Deut. xxix. 23. Cf. Job xxxix. 6 ; Ps. cvii. 34.

^d i. e. have no need for anxiety.

^e Commentators are divided between the interpretation of the text and of the margin. Curiously enough, both are borne out by the well-known habits of the partridge. For the following statement I am indebted to Mr. Riley Fortune, F.Z.S., of Harrogate, a well-known ornithologist :—

On the estate of the Earl of Harewood, at Plumpton, they hatched with the pheasants one or two broods of both French red-legged and ordinary English partridges under fowl, the nests having been destroyed in cutting hay. When the birds were hatched they were taken out into the rearing fields with the pheasants,

So is he that getteth riches,

And not by right ;

In the midst of his days ¹ they shall leave him,

And at his end he shall be a fool.

¹ Or, he
shall leave
them

12 A glorious throne, *set* on high from the beginning,

Is the place of our sanctuary ^a.

13 O LORD, the hope of Israel,

All that forsake thee shall be ashamed ;

They that depart from me shall be written in the
earth ^b,

Because they have forsaken the LORD,

The fountain of living waters.

(2) *THE PROPHET PRAYS FOR SAFETY AND THE
PUNISHMENT OF HIS ENEMIES.* xvii. 14-18.

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed ;

Save me, and I shall be saved :

For thou art my praise.

15 Behold, they say unto me, Where is the word of
the LORD ?

Let it come now.

16 As for me, I have not hastened from being a shep-² Some
herd after thee ^c ;
ancient
versions

Neither have I desired ² the woeful day ^d ; thou
knowest :

read, the
judgement
day of man.

the foster-mothers being placed in coops and the young birds allowed to run in and out. In every case were the young partridges enticed away by old partridges, birds, it is supposed, whose eggs had been destroyed.

I have received similar information from Capt. Brooksbank of Middleton Hall, who tells me that so common is this habit, that keepers will let go broods of newly-hatched young birds knowing that they will be adopted at once.

As evidence of the appropriation of eggs not her own, I may mention that in 1906 I found a pheasant's nest with several partridge's and pheasant's eggs together. In such cases, and they occur not unfrequently, I am told that it is usually the partridge which hatches and rears the young.

The statement, therefore, repeated by almost every commentator that the habit alluded to is a mere popular belief without foundation, is an unverified tradition and incorrect.

The further implied supposition that the young birds desert their foster-mother is probably nothing more than a popular belief, though it may be worth considering that in the first case here adduced the young were persuaded to desert their unnatural foster-mother for one of their own kind. (F. H. W.).

^a This verse is taken by many commentators as an apostrophising of the Temple : ' O glorious throne, on high from the beginning ! O place of our sanctuary !'

^b Shall perish as a name perishes which is written in the sand.

^c I have not allowed any temptations to allure me from Thee in performance of my prophetic work. But the figure of the shepherd in the Old Testament is otherwise only applied to kings and rulers. The thought is cramped, and probably the text is corrupt.

^d His enemies accused him of delighting in the evil which he predicted, a singularly unfair charge. See iv. 12-22 ; viii. 18 ff.

That which came out of my lips was before thy face ^a.

Be not a terror unto me : 17

Thou art my refuge in the day of evil.

Let them be ashamed that persecute me, 18

But let not me be ashamed ;

Let them be dismayed,

But let not me be dismayed :

Bring upon them the day of evil,

And ¹ destroy them with double destruction.

¹ Heb.
break them
with a
double
breach.

3) AN EXHORTATION TO HALLOW THE SABBATH,
ADDRESSED TO ALL WHO HAVE ENTERED
THE GATES OF JERUSALEM. xvii. 19-27.

Breaking the sabbath was a sin of old standing.

xvii. 19-23.

¹ Or, the
common
people
See
ch. xxvi. 23.

Thus said the LORD unto me : Go, and stand in the 19
gate ^b of ² the children of the people, whereby the kings
of Judah come in, and by ~~the~~ which they go out, and
in all the gates of Jerusalem ; and say unto them, 20

² Or, for
your life's
sake

Hear ye the word of the LORD, ye kings of Judah,
and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
that enter in by these gates ; thus saith the LORD : 21
Take heed ³ to yourselves, and bear no burden on the
sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem ^c ;
neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the 22
sabbath day, neither do ye any work : but hallow ye
the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers ; but 23
they hearkened not, neither inclined their ear, but
made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, and
might not receive instruction.

*The renewal of the Davidic covenant would follow
obedience. xvii. 24-27.*

And it shall come to pass, 24

If ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD,
To bring in no burden through the gates of this city
on the sabbath day,

But to hallow the sabbath day,

To do no work therein ;

Then shall there enter in by the gates of this city 25

^a Jehovah knew what Jeremiah's teaching had been.

^b Perhaps what is now the Jaffa Gate, the principal thoroughfare for people coming from the south, south-west, and north-west, and so called the ' People's Gate '.

^c Perhaps an allusion to country people bringing their produce into the city when they came to worship, and to citizens (ver. 22) who took their goods to the gates to barter with these villagers. Cf. Neh. xiii. 15-22.

Kings and princes
 Sitting upon the throne of David,
 Riding in chariots and on horses,
 They, and their princes,
 The men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem :
 And this city shall ¹ remain for ever. ¹ Or, *be inhabited*†

26 And they shall come from the cities of Judah,
 And from the places round about Jerusalem,
 And from the land of Benjamin,
 And from the lowland, and from the mountains,
 And from the South ^a,
 Bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and ² obla- ² Or, *meal offerings*
 tions, and frankincense,
 And bringing *sacrifices of* thanksgiving,
 Unto the house of the LORD ^b.

27 But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the
 sabbath day,
 And not to bear a burden
 And enter in at the gates of Jerusalem on the
 sabbath day ;
 Then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof,
 And it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem,
 And it shall not be quenched.

VIII. SYMBOLIC DISCOURSES CONNECTED WITH THE POTTER'S CRAFT, AND THE SUBSEQUENT TREATMENT OF JERE- MIAH. xviii—xx.

(1) *THE WORK OF THE POTTER.* xviii.

*How it symbolised God's conditional dealing with
 nations.* xviii. 1—10.

18 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD,
² saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and
³ there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I
 went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought
⁴ his work on the wheels^c. And when the vessel that

^a See note on xiii. 19. The whole of the Southern Kingdom is referred to in this verse.

^b The mention of the worship of Jehovah as a matter of course, and the absence of any reference to idolatry, suggest the probability that this prophecy belongs to the post-reformation period of Josiah.

^c The wheels (Heb. 'stones') were two (the word is dual)—the lower one, which was worked with the foot, setting the upper in motion. It was on this flat disc that the clay was placed, and as it revolved the potter shaped it.

he made of the clay was marred in the hand of the potter, he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 5
O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? 6
saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At 7
what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it; if that nation, concerning which I 8
have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what 9
instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do 10
evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

Judah's unnatural conduct vindicated the justice of their doom. xviii. 11-17.

Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and 11
to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

Thus saith the LORD:

Behold, I frame evil against you,
And devise a device against you:
Return ye now every one from his evil way,
And amend your ways and your doings.
But they say,

12

There is no hope:
For we will walk after our own devices,
And we will do every one after the stubbornness
of his evil heart.

Therefore thus saith the LORD: 13

Ask ye now among the nations, who hath heard
such things;
The virgin ^a of Israel hath done a very horrible
thing.

Shall the snow of Lebanon fail from the rock of 14
the field ^b?

^a See note on xiv. 17.

^b The point of this verse requires us to suppose that something is suggested that never takes place and may be regarded as being impossible. The intention probably is to contrast the perennial waters which come from the snow-fed Lebanon streams with the wadys of Palestine which dry up in the summer. But a difficulty lies in the fact that the Lebanon snows do not actually last through the whole summer. The language of the verse is also very peculiar, and probably there is some corruption of the text.

- Or shall the cold waters ¹ that flow down from ¹ Or, of
 afar be ² dried up? *strange*
 15 For my people hath forgotten me, *lands that*
 They have burned incense to vanity; *flow down*
 And they have caused them to stumble in their *be &c.*
 ways, in the ancient paths, ² Or, *plucked up*
 To walk in bypaths, in a way not cast up;
 16 To make their land an astonishment, and a
 perpetual hissing;
 Every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished,
 And shake his head.
 17 I will scatter them as with an east wind before the
 enemy;
 I will ³ look upon their back, and not their ³ Or, *shew*
 face ^a, *them the*
back, and
not the
face†
 In the day of their calamity.

*The prophet's imprecation because of the plots against
 him. xviii. 18-23.*

- 18 Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices
 against Jeremiah;
 For the law shall not perish from the priest,
 Nor counsel from the wise,
 Nor the word from the prophet ^b.
 Come, and let us smite him with the tongue,
 And let us not give heed to any of his words.
 19 Give heed to me, O LORD,
 And hearken to the voice of them that contend
 with me.
 20 Shall evil be recompensed for good?
 For they have digged a pit for my soul.
 Remember how I stood before thee to speak good
 for them,
 To turn away thy fury from them.
 21 Therefore ^c deliver up their children to the famine,
 And give them over to the power of the sword;
 And let their wives become childless, and widows;
 And let their men be slain of death,
 And their young men smitten of the sword in battle.
 22 Let a cry be heard from their houses,

^a Lit. 'look upon them with the back and not the face.'

^b If Jeremiah is put out of the way we have many a wise priest and prophet to give much better advice than he.

^c Jeremiah in seeking this evil for his enemies does not altogether escape the moral limitations of his time. Cf. xvii. 18.

When thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them :
 For they have digged a pit to take me,
 And hid snares for my feet.
 Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against 23
 me to slay me ;
 Forgive not their iniquity,
 Neither blot out their sin from thy sight :
 But let them be ¹ overthrown before thee ;
 Deal thou with them in the time of thine anger.

¹ Heb.
*made to
 stumble.*

(2) *THE BROKEN CRUSE—A SYMBOL OF FINAL
 AND IRRETRIEVABLE RUIN^a. xix. 1-13.*

Thus said the LORD, Go, and buy a potter's earthen **19**
 bottle ^b, and *take* of the elders of the people, and of
 the elders of the priests ; and go forth unto the valley of 2
 the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of ² the gate
 Harsith ^c, and proclaim there the words that I shall
 tell thee : and say, 3

[†] ² Or, *the
 gate of
 potshards*

Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah,
 And inhabitants of Jerusalem ;
 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,
 Behold, I will bring evil upon this place ^d,
 'The which whosoever heareth, his ears shall
 tingle.

Because they have forsaken me, 4
 And have estranged this place ^e,
 And have burned incense in it unto other gods,
 Whom they knew not,
 They and their fathers and the kings of Judah ;
 And have filled this place with the blood of inno-
 cents ^f ;

^a The whole of ch. xix and xx. 1-6 seems to have been taken in the main from a biography of Jeremiah. See Introduction, p. 44. Its position here is probably due to the resemblance of the opening subject to that of the previous chapter. The relation of the prophecy of the broken bottle to that of vii. 29—viii. 3 is not very easy to determine. It may be that they are merely two recensions of the same prophecy, this being the biographical form. But it is more probable that this was originally a distinct and *much later* prophecy into which the former has been incorporated in verses 5, 6 and the last clause of 11. So considered, the chief point of the earlier prophecy is the desecration of Topheth, of the second the terrors of the siege and the final destruction of Jerusalem, which is to be defiled, as Topheth has already been defiled.

^b Its neck was long and narrow and its name was derived from the gurgling sound made in pouring from it.

^c Probably the Dung Gate of Neh. iii. 13-14, which led to the valley of Ben-Hinnom. The roadway was possibly paved with sherds. (See Driver.)

^d i. e. Jerusalem.

^e By the introduction of foreign modes of worship. See note on xv. 4.

^f This probably refers not to the slaughter of children but either to judicial

- 5 And have built the high places of Baal ^a,
 To burn their sons in the fire for burnt offerings
 unto Baal;
 Which I commanded not, nor spake it,
 Neither came it into my ¹ mind ^b: ¹ Heb.
heart.
- 6 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the
 LORD,
 That this place shall no more be called Topheth,
 Nor The valley of the son of Hinnom,
 But The valley of Slaughter.
- 7 And I will ² make void the counsel of Judah and ² Heb.
 Jerusalem in this place; empty out.
 And I will cause them to fall by the sword before
 their enemies,
 And by the hand of them that seek their life:
 And their carcases will I give to be meat for the
 fowls of the heaven,
 And for the beasts of the earth.
- 8 And I will make this city an astonishment, and an
 hissing;
 Every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished
 and hiss
 Because of all the plagues thereof.
- 9 And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons
 And the flesh of their daughters,
 And they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend,
 In the siege and in the straitness,
 Wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their
 life, shall straiten them.
- 10 Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the
 11 men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them,
 Thus saith the LORD of hosts:
 Even so will I break this people and this city,
 As one breaketh a potter's vessel ^c,
 That cannot be made whole again:
 And they shall bury in Topheth,
³ Till there be no place to bury. ³ Or,
Because
there shall
be no place
else †
- 12 Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD,

murder (cf. ii. 34) or to Manasseh's persecution of those citizens of Jerusalem who adhered to the old monotheistic faith. Cf. 2 Kings xxi. 16.

^a i. e. Molech. See note on vii. 31.

^b See notes on vii. 31.

^c Bottles and pitchers, made of earthenware, resembled those of porous clay now made in the East. They were formed on the potter's wheel and baked in a kiln; and being very fragile, were frequently broken, as can be seen by the many sherds lying about every well in Palestine. Cf. Eccles. xii. 6.

And to the inhabitants thereof,
 Even making this city as Topheth^a :
 And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the 13
 kings of Judah, which are defiled^b,
 Shall be as the place of Topheth,
 Even all the houses upon whose roofs^c they have
 burned incense unto all the host of heaven,
 And have poured out drink offerings unto other
 gods.

(3) *EVIL IS PRONOUNCED UPON THE CITY
 BECAUSE OF ITS STUBBORNESS.*

xix. 14-15.

Then came Jeremiah from Topheth, whither the LORD 14
 had sent him to prophesy ; and he stood in the court
 of the LORD's house, and said to all the people : Thus 15
 saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I
 will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the
 evil that I have pronounced against it ; because they
 have made their neck stiff, that they might not hear
 my words.

(4) *ILL-TREATMENT BY THE TEMPLE OVERSEER,
 AND THE PROPHET'S REJOINDER. xx. 1-6.*

Now Pashhur the son of Immer the priest, who was 20
 chief officer^d in the house of the LORD, heard Jere-
 miah prophesying these things. Then Pashhur smote 2
 Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that
 were in the upper gate of Benjamin^e, which was in the
 house of the LORD. And it came to pass on the mor- 3
 row, that Pashhur brought forth Jeremiah out of the
 stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath
 not called thy name Pashhur, but ¹ Magor-missabib^f.
 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a 4
 terror to thyself, and to all thy friends : and they shall
 fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall

† ¹ That is,
*Terror on
 every side.*

^a Topheth had already been defiled by Josiah. 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

^b i. e. by idolatry. This being so the city would be defiled, but in another sense, by shameful treatment at the hand of the foe.

^c On their flat roofs festivals were held (Judges xvi. 27) and offerings made to heavenly bodies. 2 Kings xxiii. 11-12 ; Jer. xxxii. 29 ; Zeph. i. 5.

^d i. e. the overseer who presided over the Temple and its discipline and exercised an authority nearly equal to that of the chief priest. See xxix. 26 ; 2 Kings xxv. 18.

^e i. e. the northern gate of the inner court of the Temple, to be distinguished, of course, from the northern gate in the city wall.

^f He is no longer to be called by his own name, but by one signifying the panic which the enemy would produce on all sides. See ver. 10 and vi. 25, where see note. Cf. Hos. i. 2-9 ; Isa. vii. 3-14 ; viii. 3-4.

behold it : and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.
 5 Moreover I will give all the riches of this city, and all the gains thereof, and all the precious things thereof, yea, all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them,
 6 and take them, and carry them to Babylon. And thou, Pashhur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity : and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and there shalt thou be buried, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied falsely.

(5) *MEDITATIONS OF THE PROPHET UNDER PERSECUTION.* xx. 7-18.

Bitter complaint of the hostility caused by the outburst of the prophetic fire. xx. 7-10.

- 7 O LORD, thou hast ¹deceived me, and I was de-¹ Or, *enticed*†
 ceived :
 Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed ^a :
 I am become a laughing-stock all the day,
 Every one mocketh me.
 8 For as often as I speak, I cry out ^b ;
 I cry, Violence and spoil ^c :
 Because ^d the word of the LORD is made a reproach
 unto me,
 And a derision, all the day.
 9 And if I say, I will not make mention of him,
 Nor speak any more in his name,
 Then there is in mine heart as it were a burning fire
 shut up in my bones,
 And I am weary with forbearing,
 And I cannot *contain* ^e.
 10 For I have heard the defaming of many,
 Terror on every side ^f.

^a A double complaint, that Jehovah had enticed him to be a prophet (cf. xv. 16), and that He had drawn him by an irresistible force.

^b I utter a loud cry of complaint.

^c I call out 'violence and spoil'. It means either that he foretold these evils, or more probably, that he denounced them as the sins of the people.

^d Better 'for' as at the beginning of the verse. Thus the word introduces the two complaints of the prophet : (1) that he was bound to denounce wrong ; (2) that he suffered reproach in consequence.

^e When tempted to give way the prophet is overpowered by the Divine voice, which must express itself.

^f A repetition of the complaint of verse 8. The symbolical name which he

Denounce, and we will denounce him ^a,
 Say all my familiar friends,
 They that watch for my halting ;
 Peradventure he will be enticed ^b,
 And we shall prevail against him,
 And we shall take our revenge on him.

Triumphant confidence in God's avenging power.

XX. 11-13.

But the LORD is with me as a mighty one and a 11
 terrible :

Therefore my persecutors shall stumble,
 And they shall not prevail :

¹ Or,
prospered

They shall be greatly ashamed,
 Because they have not ¹ dealt wisely,
 Even with an everlasting dishonour

Which shall never be forgotten.

But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, 12
 That seest the reins and the heart,
 Let me see thy vengeance on them ;
 For unto thee have I revealed my cause ^c.

Sing unto the LORD, 13
 Praise ye the LORD :

For he hath delivered the soul of the needy
 From the hand of evil-doers.

A renewed outburst of passionate grief^d. XX. 14-18.

Cursed be the day wherein I was born : 14
 Let not the day wherein my mother bare me be
 blessed.

Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my 15
 father,

Saying, A man child is born unto thee ;
 Making him very glad.

And let that man be as the cities ^e which the LORD 16
 overthrew,

And repented not :

And let him hear a cry in the morning,

had in ver. 3 given to Pashhur, he here again uses as a description of his own circumstances, though with a different application. See note on ver. 3.

^a His friends urge that Jeremiah should be denounced to the authorities, and promise their co-operation.

^b They try to tempt him to commit some crime or irregularity in order to accuse him. ^c Cf. xi. 20.

^d This passage closely resembles Job iii. 1-12, which is probably a more elaborated imitation of it. Cf. xv. 10.

^e viz. Sodom and Gomorrah.

- And ¹ shouting ^a at noontide ; ¹ Or, an alarm
 17 Because he slew me not from the womb ;
 And so my mother should have been my grave,
 And her womb always great.
 18 Wherefore came I forth out of the womb
 To see labour and sorrow,
 That my days should be consumed with shame ?

Part III.

A SERIES OF MISCELLANEOUS PROPHECIES, IN THEIR PRESENT FORM BELONGING TO ZEDEKIAH'S REIGN, THOUGH SOME OF THEM ARE EARLIER PROPHECIES REVISED. xxi—xxiv.

I. A PROPHECY CONNECTED WITH THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM BY NEBUCHADREZZAR IN ZEDEKIAH'S REIGN. xxi.

The prophet announces to Zedekiah the horror of the approaching capture of Jerusalem. xxi. 1-7.

- 21 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when king Zedekiah sent unto him Pashhur ^b the son of Malchiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying, Inquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us ; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us : peradventure the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.
 3 Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah :
 4 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel,
 Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands,
 Wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, And against the Chaldeans ^c which besiege you, without the walls,
 And I will gather them ^d into the midst of this city.

^a Either the shout of battle or the call to arms on the part of the besiegers. See Glossary ('alarm') and note on Zeph. i. 16.

^b It is possible that a confusion by some later editor of this Pashhur with Pashhur the son of Immer in the previous chapter accounts for the peculiar position of this chapter. Both Pashhur and Zephaniah urged resistance to Nebuchadrezzar.

^c Chaldea proper was only the south of Babylonia, but Nebuchadrezzar's Chaldea comprised the whole of the country between the Euphrates and the Tigris, together with an equal tract of land between the Euphrates and the Arabian desert. See pp. 13 and 25.

^d i. e. the weapons. A poetical way of saying that these weapons would be powerless. The Chaldeans would drive them into the city, weapons and all.

And I myself will fight against you 5
 With an outstretched hand and with a strong
 arm,
 Even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.
 And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, 6
 Both man and beast :
 They shall die of a great pestilence.
 And afterward, saith the LORD, 7
 I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah,
 And his servants, and the people,
 Even such as are left in this city
 From the pestilence, from the sword, and from
 the famine,
 Into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of
 Babylon,
 And into the hand of their enemies,
 And into the hand of those that seek their
 life :
 And he shall smite them with the edge of
 the sword ;
 He shall not spare them,
 Neither have pity, nor have mercy.

He counsels people and king to submit to the Chaldeans.
 xxi. 8-10.

And unto this people thou shalt say, 8
 Thus saith the LORD :
 Behold, I set before you the way of life and the
 way of death.
 He that abideth in this city shall die 9
 By the sword, and by the famine, and by the
 pestilence :
 But he that goeth out, and falleth away to the
 Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live,
 And his life shall be unto him for a prey ^a.
 For I have set my face upon this city for evil, and 10
 not for good, saith the LORD :
 It shall be given into the hand of the king of
 Babylon,
 And he shall burn it with fire.

^a i.e. though he would not get spoils, he would at any rate save his own life.
 Cf. xxxviii. 2 ; xxxix. 18 ; xlv. 5. See also xxxix. 9 ; lii. 15.

Kings warned to do strict justice^a. xxi. 11-12.

11 And touching the house of the king of Judah, hear ye the word of the LORD :

12 O house of David, thus saith the LORD,
Execute judgement in the morning^b,
And deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the
oppressor,
Lest my fury go forth like fire,
And burn that none can quench it,
Because of the evil of ¹ your doings.

*

*

*

*

¹ Another reading is, *their*.

Jehovah would punish the ungodly sceptics. xxi. 13-14.

13 Behold, I am against thee, O ²inhabitant of the valley,² Heb. *inhabitant*.
³ And of the rock of the plain^c, saith the LORD ;³ Or, And
Ye which say, Who shall come down against us ?
Or who shall enter into our habitations ?

14 And I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings,

Saith the LORD :

And I will kindle a fire in her forest^d,
And it shall devour all that is round about her.

II. PROPHECIES AGAINST THE KINGS AND PROPHETS^e. xxii—xxiii (except 19-20).

(1) *THE SIN AND THE DOOM OF JUDAH'S KINGS AND THE PROMISE OF THE RIGHTEOUS BRANCH.* xxii—xxiii. 8.

An appeal to the king and royal house to do justice.
xxii. 1-5.

22 Thus said the LORD : Go down to the house of the
2 king of Judah, and speak there this word^f, and say,

^a These two verses were originally extracts, it would seem, from iv. 4 ; xxi. 3, to shew that the punishment of the king was in consequence of his refusal to take warning.

^b Kings dispensed justice in the morning. Cf. 2 Sam. xv. 2 ; Ps. ci. 8. Keil renders 'every morning'.

^c The 'valley' was probably the Tyropœan, which ran through Jerusalem ; and 'the rock of the plain' Zion, the original stronghold of the Jebusites.

^d i.e. the city of Jerusalem. Cf. xxii. 7 with lii. 13 and 2 Kings xxv. 9.

^e Though the prophecies in ch. xxii obviously belong originally to different dates, and the last carries us down to the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, there is a general unity of thought and style which suggests that the whole is a summary by the prophet of his previous utterances rather than a collection of altogether independent prophecies.

^f Verses 1-12, or, at any rate, 1-5, 10-12, evidently have reference to the first years of Jehoiakim, when Jeremiah still hopes that his warnings may prove effectual.

¹ Heb. *for David upon his throne.*

Hear the word of the LORD. O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates. Thus saith the LORD: Execute ye judgement and ³ righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence, to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this ⁴ thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings ^a sitting ¹ upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses ^b, he, and his servants, and his people. But if ye will not hear these words, ⁵ I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation ^c.

The predicted fall of the royal city ^d. xxii. 6-9.

^e Or, *unto* For thus saith the LORD ² concerning the house of the 6 king of Judah:

Thou art Gilead unto me, *and* the head of Lebanon ^e:

Yet surely I will make thee a wilderness,

And cities which are not inhabited.

[†] ³ Heb. *sanctify.*

And I will ³ prepare destroyers against thee, 7

Every one with his weapons:

And they shall cut down thy choice cedars,

And cast them into the fire.

And many nations shall pass by this city, and they ⁸ shall say every man to his neighbour, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city? Then they ⁹ shall answer, Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

A lamentation over the sad fate of Jehoahaz.

xxii. 10-12.

Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him ^f: 10
But weep sore for him that goeth away;

^a Though the warning was originally uttered to Jehoiakim, the prophet now has his successor also in mind.

^b Jeremiah's ideal of sovereignty did not exclude the dignity of royal state. Cf. xvii. 25, and contrast Zech. ix. 9.

^c Cf. Matt. xxiii. 38 f. (Luke xiii. 35).

^d Jeremiah now realises that his warnings would be of no avail.

^e Gilead and Lebanon were noted, the one for its healing balm (viii. 22, where see note), the other for its sweet-smelling cedars and flowers (Cant. iv. 11; Hos. xiv. 6). Here proverbially used for what God delights in as beautiful and luxuriant.

^f i.e. Josiah, for whom, according to the chronicler, an annual mourning had

For he shall return no more,
Nor see his native country.

- 11 For thus saith the LORD touching ¹ Shallum the son of ¹ In
Josiah, king of Judah, which reigned instead of Jo- ² Kings
siah his father, which went forth out of this place : ^{xxiii. 30,}
He shall not return thither any more ; ^{Jehoahaz.}
12 But in the place whither they have led him captive, ^{Compare}
There shall he die, ^{1 Chr. iii.}
And he shall see this land no more. ^{15.†}

*Jehoiakim's covetousness and luxury contrasted with
Josiah's just rule. xxii. 13-19.*

- 13 Woe ^a unto him that buildeth his house by unright-
eousness,
And his chambers by injustice ;
That useth his neighbour's service without wages,
And giveth him not his hire ;
14 That saith, I will build me a wide house
And spacious chambers,
And cutteth him out windows ;
And it is cieled with cedar,
And painted with vermilion ^b.
15 Shalt thou reign, because thou ² strivest to excel in ² Or, *wiest*
cedar ^c ? ^{with the}
Did not thy father ^d eat and drink, ^{cedar}
And do judgement and justice ?
Then it was well with him.
16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy ;
Then it was well.
Was not this to know me ? saith the LORD.
17 But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy
³ covetousness, ³ Or,
And for to shed innocent blood, ^{dishonest}
And for oppression, ^{gain †}
And for violence, to do it.

been instituted (2 Chron. xxxv. 25). The meaning is that the fate of Jehoahaz, a lingering captivity ending in death, is worse than that of Josiah. See 2 Kings xxiii. 29-33. Shallum's fate would therefore call for lamentation more than that of his father.

^a Jeremiah's warning had again been disregarded.

^b An Assyrian pigment, perhaps oxide of lead. See Ezek. xxiii. 14.

^c The great cause of aggravation was that the king indulged in all this costly extravagance, while the people were oppressively taxed for the tribute to Egypt. See 2 Kings xxiii. 35.

^d i.e. Josiah. See 2 Kings xxiii. 34. He was no ascetic, but yet he was just and kind.

Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim 18
the son of Josiah, king of Judah :

They shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah my brother !

Or, Ah sister !

They shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord !

Or, Ah his glory ^a !

He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, 19

Drawn and cast forth

Beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

A lamentation over Judah's ruin. xxii. 20-23.

Go up to Lebanon, and cry ^b ; 20

And lift up thy voice in Bashan :

And cry from Abarim ;

For all thy lovers are destroyed.

I spake unto thee in thy prosperity ; 21

But thou saidst, I will not hear.

This hath been thy manner from thy youth,

That thou obeyedst not my voice.

[†] Or, *feed upon*

The wind shall ¹ feed all thy shepherds ^c, 22

And thy lovers shall go into captivity :

Surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded

For all thy wickedness.

² Heb. *inhabitant*.

O ² inhabitant of Lebanon, 23

That makest thy nest in the cedars ^d,

³ Some ancient versions have, *How wilt thou groan.*

³ How greatly to be pitied shalt thou be when
pangs come upon thee,

The pain as of a woman in travail !

[†] ⁴ In ch. xxiv. 1, and 1 Chr. iii. 16, *Jechoniah*. In 2 Kings xxiv. 6, 8, *Jehoiachin*.

The miserable exile of Jehoiachin. xxii. 24-30.

As I live, saith the LORD, 24

Though ⁴ Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of

Judah were the signet ^e upon my right hand,

^a Such exclamations formed part of a common funeral dirge. Cf. xxxiv. 5 ; 1 Kings xiii. 30. Neither his relatives nor his subjects would lament his death (Keil). In xxxvi. 30 an even more dishonoured fate is predicted.

^b The daughter of Jerusalem (the verbs are imper. fem. sing.) is invited to mourn her fate on the mountains surrounding Palestine, from which the help of friendly neighbouring peoples (lovers) might have been hoped for. Abarim, i.e. Mount Nebo (see Num. xxvii. 12), and the surrounding hills.

^c A play on the words : ' the feeders would be themselves fed upon ' ; i.e. their rulers (xxiii. 1) would be destroyed. Cf. ii. 16.

^d Jerusalem, feeling secure in her hills, is compared to the stork whose nest in the cedars of Lebanon cannot be disturbed, with possibly a secondary allusion to the cedar palaces of the rich nobles. Cf. ver. 15.

^e Another figure, expressing even more emphatically the thought of ver. 6, but here hypothetically. Even if Jehoiachin were God's most precious jewel,

- Yet would I pluck thee thence ;
 25 And I will give thee into the hand of them that
 seek thy life,
 And into the hand of them of whom thou art
 afraid,
 Even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of
 Babylon,
 And into the hand of the Chaldeans.
 26 And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare
 thee ^a,
 Into another country, where ye were not born ;
 And there shall ye die.
 27 But to the land whereunto ¹ their soul longeth to ¹ Heb.
 return, *they lift up*
 Thither shall they not return.
 28 Is this man Coniah a despised broken ² vessel ? ² Or, *pot*
 Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure ?
 Wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed,
 And are cast into the land which they know not ?
 29 O ³ earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD, ³ Or, *land*
 30 Thus saith the LORD,
 Write ye this man childless ^b,
 A man that shall not prosper in his days :
 For no man of his seed shall prosper,
 Sitting upon the throne of David,
 And ruling any more in Judah.

The unworthy rulers denounced. xxiii. 1-2.

23 Woe unto the shepherds ^c that destroy and scatter the
 sheep ^d of my pasture ! saith the LORD.

² Therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel,

He would cast him off. Like Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin only reigned three months, and had no opportunity of shewing his capacity as a ruler. Though only eighteen years old he is believed by some, on the strength of Ezek. xix. 5-9 (where see note), to have borne a character for savage violence. This, xiii. 18-19 ; xxiv. 1 ; xxvii. 19-20 ; and xxix. 1-2, are the only references which Jeremiah himself makes to the siege and first Captivity, 597 B. C. It has been suggested by Erbt that he remained hidden outside Jerusalem in the refuge to which he had fled from Jehoiachin. G. A. Smith says that 'this suggestion is strengthened by the fact that he escaped the deportation of the notables of the city to Babylonia. Cf. Jer. xxiv. 1' (*Jerusalem*, ii. p. 247).

^a Nehushta. See 2 Kings xxiv. 8, 12, and cf. Jer. xiii. 18.

^b i. e. one whose sons are to be cut off. Though only eighteen he appears to have had a wife and at least one child. Note the reference to 'his seed' in ver. 28. His successor, Zedekiah, was his uncle, and, with his sons, died before him (lii. 10, 31).

^c Cf. Ezek. xxxiv, where the thought of this chapter has been expanded. By shepherds are meant the rulers, especially the unworthy kings.

^d Which I the Great Shepherd feed and tend. Cf. Ps. xxiii ; c. 3.

against the shepherds that feed my people: Ye have scattered my flock^a, and driven them away, and have not visited them^b; behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings,

Saith the LORD.

The ultimate restoration of the remnant under the righteous rule of the Messiah. xxiii. 3-8.

And I will gather the remnant of my flock 3
Out of all the countries whither I have driven them,
And will bring them again to their folds;
And they shall be fruitful and multiply.
And I will set up shepherds over them which shall 4
feed them:
And they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed,
Neither shall any be lacking,

Saith the LORD.

†¹ Or,
Shoot
Or, *Bud*
² Or,
prosper

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, 5
That I will raise unto David a righteous¹ Branch^c,
And he shall reign as king and² deal wisely,
And shall execute judgement and justice in the land.
In his days Judah shall be saved, 6
And Israel shall dwell safely:
And this is his name whereby he shall be called,
³ The LORD is our righteousness^d.

³ Or, *The*
LORD our
righteous-
ness

†⁴ See ch.
xvi. 14, 15.

⁴ Therefore^e, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, 7
That they shall no more say,
As the LORD liveth,
Which brought up the children of Israel
Out of the land of Egypt;
But, As the LORD liveth, 8
Which brought up and which led the seed of the
house of Israel
Out of the north country,
And from all the countries whither I had
driven them;
And they shall dwell in their own land.

^a They had acted like wolves rather than shepherds. Cf. John x. 12.

^b Have not sought them out to tend them.

^c Probably to be understood as a shoot rising out of the fallen monarchy of Judah, the line of Davidic kings.

^d The righteousness of Jehovah would be realised in the character and work of the Messiah. The margin, though a more literal rendering, conveys a wrong idea to the English reader. The fact that in xxxiii. 16, where the prophecy is repeated, the name is given not to the king, but to Jerusalem, forbids our regarding the phrase as a theological definition of Messiah's nature.

^e Cf. xvi. 14-15, where see note.

(2) *DENUNCIATION OF FALSE PROPHETS.*

xxiii. 9-40.

*God's holy anger against the wickedness of people,
prophets, and priests. xxiii. 9-12.*

9 Concerning the prophets.

Mine heart within me is broken ^a,

All my bones shake ;

I am like a drunken man,

And like a man whom wine hath overcome ;

Because of the LORD,

And because of his holy words.

10 For the land is full of adulterers ;

For because of ¹ swearing the land mourneth ;

The pastures of the wilderness are dried up ;

And their course is evil,

And their force is not right ^b.

11 For both prophet and priest are profane ;

Yea, in my house have I found their wickedness ^c,

Saith the LORD.

12 Wherefore their way shall be unto them

As slippery places in the darkness :

They shall be driven on, and fall therein :

For I will bring evil upon them,

² Even the year of their visitation ^d,

Saith the LORD.

*The prophets of Jerusalem are far worse than the
prophets of Samaria were. xxiii. 13-15.*

13 And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria ;

They prophesied by Baal,

And caused my people Israel to err.

14 In the prophets of Jerusalem also ^e I have seen an
horrible thing ;

They commit adultery, and walk in lies,

And they strengthen the hands of evil-doers,

That none doth return from his wickedness :

^a The prophet is overcome by the thought of God's anger.

^b They are mighty to do evil. Cf. Isa. v. 22.

^c Usually explained of idolatry (cf. xxxii. 34), but it might mean that their grossness defiled their sacred offices, or that they made an unholy trade in the very temple. Cf. vi. 13 ; vii. 11 ; Hos. iv. 8 ; Amos ii. 8 ; Isa. xxviii. 7 ; 1 Sam. ii. 27-36.

^d When God would visit them in anger. Cf. viii. 12 ; x. 15, &c.

^e Better, 'But in the prophets of Jerusalem.' The fault of the prophets of Samaria was idolatry, the crime of those of Jerusalem gross immorality.

They are all of them become unto me as Sodom,
And the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah ^a.
Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning **15**
the prophets :

¹ See
ch. viii. 14.

Behold, I will feed them with wormwood,
And make them drink the water of ¹ gall :
For from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness
gone forth

Into all the land.

Their optimistic prophecies are delusive. xxiii. 16-18.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, **16**

Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that
prophecy unto you ;

They teach you vanity :

They speak a vision of their own heart,

And not out of the mouth of the LORD.

[†] According to the
Sept., that
despise the
word of
the Lord.
Ye &c.

They say continually unto them ² that despise me, **17**

The LORD hath said ^b,

Ye shall have peace ;

And unto every one that walketh in the stubborn-
ness of his own heart they say,

No evil shall come upon you.

For who hath stood in the council of the LORD, **18**

That he should perceive and hear his word ?

Who hath marked ³ my word, and heard it ^c ?

² Another
reading is,
his.

* * * *

FIERCE ANGER AGAINST TRANSGRESSORS^d.

xxiii. 19-20.

Behold, the tempest of the LORD, *even his* fury, is **19**
gone forth,

Yea, a whirling tempest :

It shall burst upon the head of the wicked.

The anger of the LORD shall not return, **20**

⁴ Or, done it

Until he have ⁴ executed, and till he have performed
the intents of his heart :

⁵ Or,
consider

In the latter days ye shall ⁵ understand it perfectly.

* * * *

^a Cf. Isa. i. 10.

^b The translation of LXX, &c. (marg.), involves no real difference of the Hebrew consonants.

^c This verse refers only to the false prophets, as shewn by ver. 22. To stand in Jehovah's council and hear His words is the characteristic of the true prophet.

^d A short independent fragment, which occurs again as xxx. 23-24, and here obviously breaks the context between ver. 18 and ver. 21.

The test of the true prophet lies in the spiritual result of his work. xxiii. 21-22.

- 21 I sent not these prophets,
Yet they ran:
I spake not unto them,
Yet they prophesied.
- 22 But if they had^a stood in my council,
Then had they caused my people to hear my words,
And had turned them from their evil way,
And from the evil of their doings.

The omniscient Jehovah will punish them. xxiii. 23-32.

- 23 Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD,
And not a God afar off?
- 24 Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall
not see him? saith the LORD.
Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.
- 25 I have heard what the prophets have said,
That prophesy lies in my name,
Saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.
- 26 How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets
that prophesy lies; even the prophets of the deceit of
27 their own heart? which think to cause my people to
forget my name by their dreams which they tell every
man to his neighbour, as their fathers forgot my name
28 for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream, let him
tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him
speak my word faithfully.
- What is the straw to the wheat^b? saith the LORD.
- 29 Is not my word like as fire? saith the LORD;
And like a hammer that breaketh the rock in
pieces^c?
- 30 Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith
the LORD,
That steal my words every one from his neigh-
bour^d.
- 31 Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD,
That¹ use their tongues, and say, He saith. ¹ Heb. take.
- 32 Behold, I am against them that prophesy lying
dreams, saith the LORD,

^a If they had really done so, as they wrongly claimed. See ver. 18.

^b These dreams are as different from Jehovah's word as straw is from wheat.

^c Very different from the optimistic promises of the false prophets. Here, as frequently, the prophecy is spoken of as though it brought about the evil which it threatens. Cf. v. 14.

^d Some of these 'prophecies' are mere plagiarisms from the prophets, others tongue-words with no real inspiration, others again invented dreams.

And do tell them, and cause my people to err
 By their lies, and by their vain boasting :
 Yet I sent them not, nor commanded them ;
 Neither shall they profit this people at all,
 Saith the LORD.

God's 'burden'^a would prove no jest. xxiii. 33-40.

¹ Or, tell
 them what
 the burden
 is

[†] The
 Sept. and
 Vulgate
 have, Ye
 are the
 burden.

[†] ³ Or, is
 his burden,
 and ye
 pervert &c.

[†] ⁴ Or, ac-
 cording to
 some
 ancient
 authorities,
 lift you up

And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, 33
 shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the
 LORD? then shalt thou ¹ say unto them, ² What
 burden ^b! I will cast you off, saith the LORD. And 34
 as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people,
 that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even
 punish that man and his house. Thus shall ye say 35
 every one to his neighbour, and every one to his
 brother, What hath the LORD answered? and, What
 hath the LORD spoken? And the burden of the LORD 36
 shall ye mention no more: for every man's own word
³ shall be his burden ^c; for ye have perverted the words
 of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God.
 Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the 37
 LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD
 spoken? But if ye say, The burden of the LORD; 38
 therefore thus saith the LORD: Because ye say this
 word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto
 you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the
 LORD; therefore, behold, I will ⁴ utterly forget ^d you, 39
 and I will cast you off, and the city that I gave unto
 you and to your fathers, away from my presence: and 40
 I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a
 perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

^a This passage is a play on the literal and secondary meaning of the word 'burden', the latter being a prophetic oracle (see note on Isa. xiii. 1). Jehovah would punish those who in derision asked Jeremiah for a 'burden' (oracle), by taking them up as a burden (see ver. 39) and throwing them away. The jesters had so desecrated the word that it would be unlawful to use it. Jeremiah does not, in fact, use it of his own prophecies.

^b The Hebrew has been explained as 'What is the burden! say you? The burden is—I will cast you off.' But the LXX rendering (see margin), which merely follows a different division of the Hebrew letters, is far better.

^c The utterances of the false prophets, which they dared to call a 'burden' when they were merely their own words.

^d The word read by LXX is the verb of which 'burden' is the derived noun.

III. A SYMBOLICAL VISION CONNECTED WITH THE CAPTIVITY OF JEHOIACHIN.

xxiv.

The baskets of figs. xxiv. 1-3.

- 24** The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs set before the temple of the LORD; after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to ² Babylon^a. One basket had very good figs, like the figs that are first ripe^b: and the other basket had very bad figs, which could not be eaten, they were so ³ bad. Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the bad, very bad, that cannot be eaten, they are so bad.

The exiled Jews with Jehoiachin compared with the Jews at Jerusalem with Zedekiah. xxiv. 4-10.

- 4** And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, **5** Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I regard the captives of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the **6** Chaldeans, for good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; **7** and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their **8** whole heart. And as the bad figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad; surely thus saith the LORD, So will I give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in **9** this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt: I will even give them up to be ¹ tossed to and fro among ¹ Or, a terror unto [†] all the kingdoms of the earth for evil; to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places **10** whither I shall drive them. And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them,

^a Cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 15-16.

^b i. e. the early or spring fig, which was regarded as a delicacy and appeared about two months before the time of gathering figs, August. Cf. Isa. xxviii. 4 Mic. vii. 1; Hos. ix. 10. See note on Amos vii. 14.

till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.

Part IV.

THE GREAT JUDGEMENT THAT WAS TO COME AT THE HAND OF THE CHALDEANS ON JERUSALEM AND SURROUNDING PEOPLES (B.C. 605). xxv.

The long-continued refusal to listen to prophetic warnings. xxv. 1-7.

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the **25** people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah ; the same was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon^a ; the which **2** Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying : From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, **3** king of Judah, even unto this day, these three and twenty years, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking ; but ye have not hearkened. And the LORD **4** hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them ; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear ; saying, Return **5** ye now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers, from of old and even for evermore : and go not after other gods **6** to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the work of your hands ; and I will do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, **7** saith the LORD ; that ye might provoke me to anger with the work of your hands to your own hurt.

The captivity of Judah. xxv. 8-11.

Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts : **8**
Because ye have not heard my words,
Behold, I will send and take all the families of the **9**
north, saith the LORD,
And I will send unto Nebuchadrezzar the king of
Babylon, my servant,
And will bring them against this land,
And against the inhabitants thereof,

^a This was the year following the great battle of Carchemish, in which Nebuchadrezzar defeated Pharaoh-Neco, and so the Chaldeans became the great ruling power of the world. See xli and Intro., p. 40.

And against all these nations round about ;
 And I will ¹utterly destroy them,
 And make them an astonishment, and an hissing,
 And perpetual desolations.

¹ Heb.
devote.†

- 10 Moreover I will ²take from them
 The voice of mirth and the voice of gladness,
 The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of
 the bride,
 The sound of the millstones^a, and the light of the
 candle^b.

² Heb. cause
to perish
from them.

- 11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an
 astonishment ;
 And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon
 seventy years^c.

The subsequent fall of Babylon herself^d. xxv. 12-14.

- 12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are
 accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon,
 and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and
 the land of the Chaldeans ; and I will make it ³deso-
 late for ever.

³ Heb. ever-
lasting de-
solations.

- 13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which
 I have pronounced against it, even all that is written
 in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against
 14 all the nations^e. For many nations and great kings

⁴ shall serve themselves of them^f, even of them : and
 I will recompense them according to their deeds, and
 according to the work of their hands.

⁴ Or, have
served
themselves
or, made
bondmen

The wine-cup of God's fury to be given to the nations.

xxv. 15-29.

- 15 For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto me :
 Take the cup of the wine of this fury^g at my hand,

^a The handmill was then, as now, a common feature of a Palestinian house.
 Cf. Matt. xxiv. 41 ; Luke xvii. 35.

^b Rather 'lamp', as usually translated in R.V. It is suggestive of the
 friendly intercourse of evening, as the millstones are of the day's toil.

^c This is a Hebraistic way of saying that the inhabitants of the land
 and surrounding peoples would suffer both from the desolation of the country
 and a seventy years' subjugation. Cf. xxix. 10.

^d This paragraph is almost certainly a later interpolation. For it (1) breaks
 the connexion ; (2) refers to Jeremiah in the third person *in the prophecy itself*,
 not as elsewhere in a prefatory note (as e.g. xxv. 1 ; xxvii. 1, &c.) ; and (3) refers
 to a collection of special prophecies, which is unlikely to have been made at
 this time even in its earliest form.

^e i. e. xlvii-li, which in LXX follow ver. 13. See Introd., p. 45.

^f i. e. employ them as slaves. (See Driver.)

^g See note on xiii. 13. Jeremiah signified, probably by some symbolical
 action, that the cup was given to these several nations. Cf. xlix. 12 ; li. 7.

And cause all the nations, to whom I send thee,
to drink it.

And they shall drink, and reel to and fro, and be mad, 16
Because of the sword that I will send among them.

Then took I the cup at the LORD's hand, and made 17
all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had
sent me :

To wit,

18

Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings
thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them
a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and
a curse ; as it is this day ;

Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his 19
princes, and all his people ;

And all the mingled people ^a, 20

And all the kings of the land of Uz ^b,

And all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and
Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the remnant
of Ashdod ^c;

Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon : 21

And all the kings of Tyre, and all the kings of 22
Zidon, and the kings of the ^disle which is beyond
the sea ^d ;

+ ¹ Or,
coastland

Dedan, and Tema, and Buz ^e, 23

And all that have the corners of *their hair* polled ^f ;

And all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of 24
the mingled people that dwell in the wilderness ^g ;

And all the kings of Zimri, 25

And all the kings of Elam,

And all the kings of the Medes ;

+ ² Accord-
ing to
ancient
tradition, a
cypher for
Babel. See
ch. li. 41.

And all the kings of the north, far and near, one 26
with another ;

And all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon
the face of the earth :

And the king of ^hSheshach ^h shall drink after them.

^a i. e. non-Egyptian races dwelling in Egypt. Cf. Ex. xii. 38.

^b Probably a district east of Idumæa. It is clearly out of order and naturally belongs to ver. 23, and the clause is (perhaps intentionally) omitted in LXX.

^c Psammeticus, after a twenty-nine years' siege, had destroyed Ashdod (630 B.C.), leaving only a feeble remnant (Herod. iii. 157). Gath is not mentioned, having been utterly destroyed at the same period. See note on Amos vi. 2.

^d i. e. the Mediterranean. The reference is to the Phœnician colonies.

^e Dedan and Tema were Arabian tribes (see Isa. xxi. 13, 14), and not improbably Buz also. See Gen. xxii. 21 ; Job xxxii. 2 ; Lam. iv. 21.

^f See note on ix. 26.

^g i. e. the nomads or Bedâwin tribes.

^h Undoubtedly put for Babel (i. e. Babylon) by a method of cypher called *Atbash*, by which the alphabetical order of letters is reversed. Thus for the

- 27 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel :
 Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more,
 Because of the sword which I will send among you.
- 28 And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Ye shall surely drink. For, lo, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth,
 Saith the LORD of hosts.

The whole world embraced in the calamity of Judah.

xxv. 30-33.

- 30 Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them,
 The LORD shall roar from on high,
 And utter his voice from his holy habitation ;
 He shall mightily roar against his ¹ fold ^a ;
 He shall give a shout ^b, as they that tread *the grapes*, ^{1 Or, pasture}
 Against all the inhabitants of the earth.
- 31 A noise shall come even to the end of the earth ;
 For the LORD hath a controversy with the nations,
 He will plead with all flesh ^c ;
 As for the wicked, he will give them to the sword,
 Saith the LORD.
- 32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts,
 Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation,
 And a great tempest shall be raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth.
- 33 And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth :
 They shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried ;
 They shall be dung upon the face of the ground.

first letter of the alphabet the last is substituted, for the second the last but one. Some commentators think that this clause, like 12-14, is a later interpolation, but with less reason. Cf. xxvii. 7; li. 41.

^a i. e. against His own people.

^b The vintagers sing as they tread the grapes. See xlviii. 33.

^c Arraignment here implies punishment, but the figure suggests the thought that God's treatment of the nations is just.

Rulers and nobles will bewail their doom. xxv. 34-38.

Howl, ye shepherds, and cry ; 34
And wallow ^a yourselves *in ashes*, ye principal of the
flock ^b :

For the days of your slaughter are fully come,

¹ And I will break you in pieces,

And ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel.

And ² the shepherds shall have no way to flee, 35

Nor the principal of the flock to escape.

A voice of the cry of the shepherds, 36

And the howling of the principal of the flock !

For the LORD layeth waste their pasture.

And the peaceable folds are brought to silence 37

Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion ^c : 38

For their land is become an astonishment

Because of ³ the fierceness of the oppressing sword ^d,

And because of his fierce anger.

¹ Or, *And I will disperse you*
Many ancient versions read,
And your dispersions.

² Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escape from &c.*

³ Or, according to some ancient authorities, *the oppressing sword*. See ch. xlv. 16.

Part V.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SECTION, DESCRIBING THE CONSEQUENCES OF JEREMIAH'S PROPHECY AGAINST THE TEMPLE, GIVEN MORE FULLY IN CHAP. VII (608 B.C.). xxvi.

The people publicly warned that the fate of the sanctuary of Shiloh awaits their Temple. xxvi. 1-6.

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of **26**
Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD : Stand in the court of ² the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S house ^e, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them ; keep not back a word. It may be they will ³ hearken, and turn every man from his evil way ; that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings. And ⁴

^a See note on vi. 26.

^b The best and fattest of the sheep, here put for the leading citizens.

^c As a lion leaves his covert, so Jehovah has left His heavenly home to ravage and destroy.

^d The word translated 'fierceness' is probably a textual corruption of one closely resembling it meaning 'sword'. See margin.

^e Cf. vii. 1, 2 ; where see note. The court would probably be the lower and larger court in which the people assembled, the prophet probably standing in the gateway vii. 2 which led to the upper and inner court (xxxvi. 10).

thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD : If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I send unto you, even rising up early and sending them, but ye have not hearkened ^a ; then will I make this house like Shiloh ^b, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.

Jeremiah impeached by the priests and prophets.

xxvi. 7-9.

7 And the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die ^c

9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant? And all the people were gathered unto Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

His defence approved by prince and people. xxvi. 10-16.

10 And when the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD ; and they sat in the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house ^d. Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy of death ; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

12 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God ; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. But as for me, behold, I am in your hand : do with me as is good

^a Cf. vii. 13, 23-26.

^b Cf. vii. 12, 14.

^c To speak against Jerusalem or its Temple was sacrilegious in the eyes of the religious leaders. Cf. also Deut. xviii. 20.

^d To the south of the court of the Temple, below it (2 Kings xi. 19), and separated only by a wall with an entry, was a second court which contained the palace of the king. The other buildings—the throne hall, the hall of pillars, and the house of the forest of Lebanon—were all on the other side of the palace from the Temple.

and right in your eyes. Only know ye for certain ¹⁵ that, if ye put me to death, ye shall bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears. Then said the princes and all the people unto ¹⁶ the priests and to the prophets: This man is not worthy of death; for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.

The precedent of Micah's prophecy justified Jeremiah's acquittal. xxvi. 17-19.

† ¹ Another reading is, *Micah*. See *Micah* i. 1.

† ² See *Micah* iii. 12.

Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and ¹⁷ spake to all the assembly of the people, saying, ¹ Micah ¹⁸ the Morashtite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: ² Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest ^a. Did Hezekiah king of Judah and ¹⁹ all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and intreat the favour of the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus should we commit great evil against our own souls.

The prophet Uriah's ^b persecution and death contrasted with Jeremiah's safety. xxvi. 20-24.

And there was also a man that prophesied in the ²⁰ name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-jearim ^c; and he prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah: and when Jehoiakim the king, with all his ²¹ mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt: and Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt, *namely*, ²² Elnathan the son of Achbor, and certain men with him, into Egypt: and they fetched forth Uriah out ²³ of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king:

^a On the bearing of this passage upon the quotation in Isa. ii. 2-4, Mic. iv. 1-3, see notes on these.

^b The case of Uriah is here quoted by the *writer* in order to contrast his case with that of Jeremiah.

^c About nine miles NW. of Jerusalem, where the ark remained after the fall of Shiloh.

who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body
 24 into the graves of the ¹ common people ^a. But the ¹ Heb.
 hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jere- ^{sons of the}
 miah, that they should not give him into the hand of ^{people.}
 the people to put him to death ^b.

Part II.

PROPHECIES BELONGING TO ZEDEKIAH'S REIGN,
 ARRANGED NEARLY IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.
 xxvii—xxxiv.

I. PROPHECIES DELIVERED AT THE BE- GINNING OF ZEDEKIAH'S REIGN. xxvii—xxix.

1. THE PROPHETIC EMBLEM OF THE YOKE.

xxvii—xxviii.

*Warning sent to the neighbouring confederate
 nations. xxvii. 1—11.*

27 In the beginning of the reign of ² Jehoiakim the son ² Properly,
 of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word unto Jere- ^{Zedekiah,}
 2 miah from the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD as in some
 me: Make thee bands and ³ bars ^c, and put them ^{ancient}
 3 upon thy neck; and send them to the king of Edom, ^{authorities.}
 and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the ^{See xxv. 2,}
 children of Ammon, and to the king of Tyre, and to ^{Is. 20, 28.}
 the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers ^{xxviii. 1. *}
 which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of ^{See Lev.}
 4 Judah ^d; and give them a charge unto their masters, ^{xxvi. 12.}
 saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of
 5 Israel: Thus shall ye say unto your masters; I have
 made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon
 the face of the earth, by my great power and by my
 outstretched arm; and I give it unto whom it seemeth

^a This was probably in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and what is still the common burial-place for the Jews of Jerusalem. See Joel iii. 2.

^b The attitude of the people towards Jeremiah seems somewhat ambiguous (cf. 7, 8, 11, 16). On the whole they appear to have been influenced by the priests and false prophets against him, whereas the princes and elders were inclined to take his part. Ahikam was one of the great men sent to inquire of Huldah when the law book was discovered (2 Kings xxiii. 12, 14), and was the father of Gedaliah, who was afterwards appointed by the Babylonians governor of Jerusalem (Jer. xxxix. 14; xl. 5 ff.). This would account for his friendliness to Jeremiah, who was always in favour of submitting to the Babylonians.

^c i. e. the two wooden prongs of the 'yoke', which were fastened by 'thongs' (bands) to the plough, or by which the prongs were fastened together. Cf. xxviii. 10.

^d Obviously with the intention of forming an alliance against Babylon. It is evident from this and the next chapter that only one yoke was actually made and worn by Jeremiah to represent the servitude of the five kings. Yokes were only sent in some symbolical fashion. See notes on xlii. 4; xxv. 15.

right unto me. And now have I given all these 6
lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of
Babylon, my servant ; and the beasts of the field also
have I given him to serve him. And all the nations 7
shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until
the time of his own land come : and then many
nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.
And it shall come to pass, that the nation and the 8
kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchad-
nezzar king of Babylon, and that will not put their
neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that
nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword,
and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I
have consumed them by his hand. But as for you, 9
hearken ye not to your prophets, nor to your diviners,
nor to your dreams, nor to your soothsayers, nor to
your sorcerers^a, which speak unto you, saying, Ye
shall not serve the king of Babylon : for they 10
prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your
land ; and that I should drive you out and ye should
perish. But the nation that shall bring their neck 11
under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve^b
him, that *nation* will I let remain in their own land, saith
the LORD ; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

Zedekiah also urged to submit. xxvii. 12-15.

And I spake to Zedekiah king of Judah according 12
to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the
yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his
people, and live. Why will ye die, thou and thy 13
people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the
pestilence, as the LORD hath spoken concerning the
nation that will not serve the king of Babylon ? And 14
hearken not unto the words of the prophets that
speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king
of Babylon : for they prophesy a lie unto you. For 15
I have not sent them, saith the LORD, but they
prophesy falsely in my name ; that I might drive you
out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets
that prophesy unto you.

^a Sorcery of various kinds had come in with heathen worship, and is specially condemned in Deut. xviii. 9-12.

^b 'Serve' and 'till' are different meanings of the same Hebrew word. If they worked for the king of Babylon, they would be allowed to work their land.

Priests and people warned not to be deluded by false hopes. xxvii. 16-22.

16 Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Harken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the LORD's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon^a: for
17 they prophesy a lie unto you. Harken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: where-
18 fore should this city become a desolation? But if they be prophets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of
19 Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon. For thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that are left
20 in this city, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem;
21 yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah,
22 and at Jerusalem: They shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be, until the day that I visit them, saith the LORD; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

Jeremiah's personal conflict with Hananiah the false prophet. xxviii. 1-11.

28 And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azzur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of
2 the priests and of all the people, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have
3 broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried
4 them to Babylon: and I will bring again to this place

^a See 2 Kings xxiv. 13.

Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went to Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD, even the prophet Jeremiah said, 6 Amen: the LORD do so^a: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD'S house, and all them of the captivity, from Babylon unto this place. Nevertheless 7 hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people: The prophets that 8 have been before me and before thee of old prophesied against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil^b, and of pestilence. The prophet 9 which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, ¹ that the LORD hath truly sent him. Then 10 Hananiah the prophet took the bar from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. And Hana- 11 niah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon within two full years from off the neck of all the nations. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

† ¹ Or,
whom the
LORD hath
truly sent

Hananiah rebuked and punished. xxviii. 12-17.

Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, after 12 that Hananiah the prophet had broken the bar from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Go, and 13 tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Thou hast broken the bars of wood; but thou shalt make in their stead bars of iron. For thus saith the LORD of 14 hosts, the God of Israel: I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also. Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto 15 Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; the LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the LORD, 16 Behold, I will send thee away from off the face of the

^a With this sarcastic remark compare the rejoinder of Micah in 1 Kings xxii. 15. Even Jeremiah was not without a grim sense of humour.

^b Some MSS. read 'famine' instead of 'evil'.

earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast
 17 spoken rebellion against the LORD. So Hananiah the
 prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

(2) *JEREMIAH'S LETTER TO THE EXILES IN
 BABYLON AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.* xxix.

The circumstances under which it was written.

xxix. 1-3.

29 Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah
 the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of
 the elders of the captivity, and to the priests, and to
 the prophets, and to all the people, whom Nebuchad-
 nezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to
 2 Babylon: (after that Jeconiah the king, and the queen-
 mother, and the eunuchs, and the princes of Judah and
 Jerusalem, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, were de-
 3 parted from Jerusalem ^a;) by the hand of Elasah the
 son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah,
 (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon ^b
 to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) saying,

Jeremiah advises the exiles to settle down quietly.

xxix. 4-7.

4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto
 all the captivity, whom I have caused to be carried
 5 away captive from Jerusalem unto Babylon: Build ye
 houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and
 6 eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and beget sons
 and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give
 your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons
 and daughters; and multiply ye there, and be not dimin-
 7 ished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have
 caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto
 the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have
 peace.

Restoration is promised, but not for seventy years.

xxix. 8-15.

8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
 Let not your prophets that be in the midst of you,
 and your diviners, deceive you, neither hearken ye to
 9 your dreams which ye ¹ cause to be dreamed ^c. For ¹ Or,
 dream +

^a See 2 Kings xxiv. 10-16.

^b The purpose of this embassy is not known.

^c This would mean that they encouraged the diviners to dream auspicious
 dreams, but probably the reading of the margin (so LXX, &c.) is correct.

they prophesy falsely unto you in my name : I have not sent them, saith the LORD. For thus saith the LORD, After seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you ¹ hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD, and I will ² turn again your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD ; and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive. For ye have said, The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon ^a.

† ¹ Heb. *a latter end and hope.*

² Or, *return to*

The punishment that was to fall on those who had remained in Jerusalem ^b. xxix. 16-19.

For thus saith the LORD concerning the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and concerning all the people that dwell in this city, your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity ; thus saith the LORD of hosts : Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so bad ^c. And I will pursue after them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be ^a tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, to be an execration, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them : because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, wherewith I sent unto them my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them : but ye would not hear, Saith the LORD.

† ¹ Or, *a terror unto*

^a This verse, which is meaningless where it stands, should undoubtedly be read just before ver. 21, where the opening words should be rendered, 'Forasmuch as ye have said'. See Driver, and note on ver. 16-20.

^b Verses 16-20 are probably an interpolation. They are not found in most recensions of the LXX, and 16-19 is evidently a somewhat fuller version of xxiv. 8-10, which belongs to this period (cf. xxiv. 1 ; xxix. 1-3) ; ver. 20 was probably added to bring back the subject to the Babylonian captives.

^c Cf. the vision of the good and bad figs in ch. xxiv.

Two of the false prophets in Babylon will die a cruel death. xxix. 20-23.

20 Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon^a.

21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon;

22 and he shall slay them before your eyes; and of them shall be taken up a curse^b by all the captives of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of

23 Babylon roasted in the fire: because they have wrought folly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives^c, and have spoken words in my name falsely, which I commanded them not; and I am he that knoweth, and am witness,

Saith the LORD.

A third false prophet writes to Jerusalem to get Jeremiah arrested^d. xxix. 24-29.

24 And ¹concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite thou shalt ¹Or, unto

25 speak, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thine own name unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah^e the son of Maaseiah

26 the priest, and to all the priests, saying, The LORD hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers^f in the house of the LORD, for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet^g, that thou shouldst put him in the

27 stocks and in ²shackles. Now therefore, why hast ²Or, the collar[†]

^a After ver. 20 read ver. 15, where see note.

^b In the words 'curse' and 'roasted', there is apparently a punning allusion to the name Kolaiah in ver. 21.

^c For this combination of false prophecy and gross immorality, cf. Jer. xxiii. 14.

^d Probably the letter ends with ver. 23 and the rest of the chapter describes the result, Shemaiah's letter and the prophecy which it provoked. 'Thou' in ver. 24 is Jeremiah; in ver. 25, Shemaiah.

^e See xxi. 1.

^f We should probably read 'to be an officer' (LXX, &c.). See xx. 1-6.

^g Keil takes the two clauses together, 'every madman that plays the prophet'. But probably the latter phrase represents a distinct ground of complaint (see next verse), and refers to the frenzied utterances which characterised early prophecy (as in 1 Sam. x. 10-13), and were frequently associated with it.

thou not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you, forasmuch as he hath sent 28 unto us in Babylon, saying, *The captivity is long*: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them? And Zephaniah the priest 29 read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet.

The false prophet is rebuked and threatened.

xxix. 30-32.

Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, 30 saying, Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus 31 saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he hath caused you to trust in a lie; therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will 32 punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people, neither shall he behold the good that I will do unto my people, saith the LORD: because he hath spoken rebellion against the LORD.

II. PROPHECIES OF RESTORATION DELIVERED DURING THE FINAL INVASION OF NEBUCHADREZZAR (c. 586 B.C.). xxx-xxxii.

A prefatory note and heading. xxx. 1-4.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, 30 saying, Thus speaketh the LORD, the God of Israel, 2 saying, Write thee all the words^a that I have spoken unto thee in a book. For, lo, the days come, saith 3 the LORD, that I will¹ turn again the captivity of my
¹ Or, return
¹⁰ people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

(1) *THE DELIVERANCE OF THE WHOLE OF ISRAEL.* xxx. 5-24.

A great day of trouble for all nations: Israel alone will be delivered. xxx. 5-11.

For thus saith the LORD:

We^b have heard a voice of trembling,

5

^a i. e. the words of the following prophecy. chs. xxx and xxxi.

^b The opening words do not necessarily imply that Jehovah is, in the dramatic setting of the prophecy, the speaker. Here it is the people among whom

¹ Of fear, and not of peace.

¹ Or, There
is fear, and
no peace †

6 Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail
with child :

Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on
his loins,

As a woman in travail,
And all faces are turned into paleness ?

7 Alas ! for that day is great,

So that none is like it :

It is even the time of Jacob's trouble ;

But he shall be saved out of it.

8 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD
of hosts,

That I will break his yoke from off thy neck,

And will burst thy bands ;

And strangers shall no more serve themselves of him :

9 But they shall serve the LORD their God,

And David their king ^a,

Whom I will raise up unto them.

10 Therefore ^b fear thou not, O Jacob my servant,
Saith the LORD ;

Neither be dismayed, O Israel :

For, lo, I will save thee from afar,

And thy seed from the land of their captivity ;

And Jacob shall return,

And shall be quiet and at ease,

And none shall make him afraid.

11 For ^c I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee :
For I will make a full end of all the nations whither I
have scattered thee,

But I will not make a full end of thee ;

But I will correct thee with judgement,

And will in no wise ² leave thee unpunished.

² Or, hold
thee guilt-
less

*God alone could and would restore chastised Israel and
punish her enemies. xxx. 12-17.*

12 For ^d thus saith the LORD,
Thy hurt is incurable,

the prophet is included. Jeremiah wishes to emphasise the magnitude of the disaster, which Israel itself first shared.

^a They will be the slaves, not of foreign powers but of Jehovah and their king. The name David suggests the conception of the ideal Messianic king. Cf. Hos. iii. 5, though here it is not so definite as in Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24 ; xxxvii. 24, 25.

^b This verse and the next occur again as xlvi. 27, 28, where see note.

^c At the beginning of this verse there appear, in the corresponding xlvi. 28, the words ' Fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD.'

^d Because thy wound is incurable, i. e. by human remedies, I must heal thee,

† ¹ Or, *thy cause: for thy wound thou hast no medicines nor plaister*

² Heb. *For closing up, or, pressing.*

¹ Or, *multitude*

¹ Or, *for thy hurt, because thy pain is incurable?*

² See ch. viii. 22.

⁶ Or, *careth for*

¹ Or, *return to*

† ² Or, *mound*
Heb. *tel*.

And thy wound grievous.

There is none to plead ¹ thy cause,

² That thou mayest be bound up:

Thou hast no healing medicines ^a.

All thy lovers have forgotten thee;

They seek thee not:

For I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy,

With the chastisement of a cruel one;

For the ³ greatness of thine iniquity,

Because thy sins were increased.

Why criest thou ⁴ for thy hurt?

Thy pain is incurable:

For the ³ greatness of thine iniquity,

Because thy sins were increased,

I have done these things unto thee.

Therefore all they that devour thee shall be ¹⁶ devoured;

And all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity;

And they that spoil thee shall be a spoil,

And all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.

For I will restore ⁵ health unto thee,

And I will heal thee of thy wounds,

Saith the LORD;

Because they have called thee an outcast,

Saying, It is Zion, whom no man ⁶ seeketh after.

The captivity ended, Jerusalem will be rebuilt and enjoy God's favour under her own king. xxx. 18-22.

Thus saith the LORD:

Behold, I will ⁷ turn again the captivity of Jacob's tents ^b,

And have compassion on his dwelling places;

And the city shall be builded upon her own ⁸ heap ^c,

and punish those who devoured thee to satisfy their greed, not realising that their success was only due to the fact that they were executing God's vengeance.

^a The margin while giving the sense destroys the rhythm. The verse runs thus:—

'There is none that pleadeth thy cause,
For thy wound [no] healings,
Plaister hast thou none.'

^b The use of this word for 'house', as in 1 Kings xii. 16, originated in the nomadic period of the nation's history. Cf. iv. 20.

^c i. e. upon her ruins, the Hebrew *tel* being the mound which covers up the debris of a town (cf. Josh. xi. 13). Jeremiah here contemplates the city being absolutely destroyed by the enemy.

And the palace shall ¹remain after the manner ¹Or, *be*
thereof ^a. *inhabited* †

- 19 And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving
And the voice of them that make merry :

And I will multiply them,
And they shall not be few ;
I will also glorify them,
And they shall not be small.

- 20 Their children also shall be as aforetime,
And their congregation shall be established before
me,
And I will punish all that oppress them.

- 21 And their prince shall be of themselves,
And their ruler shall proceed from the midst of
them ^b ;
And I will cause him to draw near,
And he shall approach unto me :
For who is he that ² hath had boldness to approach ² Heb. *hath*
unto me ^c ? *been surety*
for his
heart.

Saith the LORD.

- 22 And ye shall be my people,
And I will be your God.

But God's fury will burst upon the wicked.

xxx. 23-24 ^d.

- 23 ³ Behold, the tempest of the LORD,
Even his fury, is gone forth,
A ⁴ sweeping tempest :

† ³ See ch.
xxiii. 19, 20.

It shall burst upon the head of the wicked.

⁴ Or,
gathering

- 24 The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return,
Until he have executed,
And till he have performed
The intents of his heart :
In the latter days ye shall understand it.

^a i. e. with suitable splendour.

^b No foreign king would now rule over them.

^c These words have been generally understood as meaning that the Messiah would exercise the priestly office. See Num. xvi. 5. But it would perhaps be truer to say that they rather suggest that intimate communion and intercourse with Jehovah to which the priesthood pointed, and which had been in a special sense the prerogative of Moses. Exod. xxiv. 2 ; Num. xii. 8 ; Deut. xxxiv. 10.

^d These two verses are almost the same as xxiii. 19, 20, where see note.

(2) *A PROMISE OF RESTORATION TO THE
NORTHERN KINGDOM.* xxxi. 1-22.

*Ephraim, rejoicing in his renewed prosperity, will
worship Jehovah at Jerusalem.* xxxi. 1-6.

At that time, saith the LORD,
Will I be the God of all the families of Israel,
And they shall be my people.

31

Thus saith the LORD,

2

†¹ Or, *have
found...*
when I go

The people which were left of the sword ¹found^a
grace in the wilderness ;

² Or, *when
he went to
find him
rest*

Even Israel, ² when I went to cause him to rest.

†³ Or,
from afar

The LORD appeared ³ of old ^b unto me ^c, *saying*, 3

Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love :

¹ Or, *have I
continued
lovingkind-
ness unto
thee*

Therefore ⁴ with lovingkindness have I drawn
thee ^d.

Again will I build thee, and thou shalt be built, 4
O virgin of Israel :

Again shalt thou be adorned with thy tabrets,
And shalt go forth in the dances of them that make
merry.

Again shalt thou plant vineyards upon the mount- 5
ains of Samaria :

The planters shall plant,
And shall ^e enjoy *the fruit thereof*.

†⁵ Heb.
*profane, or,
make com-
mon.* See
Lev. xix.
23-25 ;
Deut. xx. 6,
xxviii. 30.

For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon 6
the hills of Ephraim ^e shall cry,
Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion ^f
Unto the LORD our God.

^a Probably a prophetic perfect, referring to the future. Those who are not destroyed by the Chaldeans will experience God's favour (so margin), just as the Israelites did who escaped from Pharaoh. This allusion to the wanderings is suggested by the words 'in the wilderness' of the following phrase. Others, with less reason, refer the whole verse to God's past dealings with Israel during the wanderings. So text and A. V.

^b The conception of God coming from far (margin) suggests majestic greatness, as in Isa. xxx. 27, where Jehovah comes, however, in wrath. But it may be an allusion to God's dwelling in Zion. His mercy reaching to Babylonians would thus come to the exiles from afar. See 2 Chron. vi. 20, 38.

^c The exiled Ephraim is here represented as speaking.

^d i. e. brought thee out of exile, or it may refer to God's gentle discipline.

^e Literally, mount Ephraim ; i. e. the hill country of Samaria, which was the central range of Palestine. Josh. xvii. 15 ; xix. 50 ; Judges iii. 27 ; iv. 5. By 'watchmen' is meant the keepers of the vineyards, &c. Cf. Job xxvii. 18.

^f Jeremiah was inspired with the Deuteronomic teaching of the centralisation of worship at Zion.

The prophet foresees first their happy return from exile.

XXXI. 7-14.

- 7 For thus saith the LORD,
Sing with gladness for Jacob,
And shout¹ for the chief of the nations^a : ¹ Or, at the head
Publish ye, praise ye, and say,
O LORD, save thy people^b, the remnant of Israel.
- 8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country,
And gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth,
And with them the blind and the lame,
The woman with child and her that travaileth with child together^c :
A great company shall they return hither.
- 9 They shall come with weeping,
And with supplications will I lead them^d :
I will² cause them to walk^e by rivers of waters, ² Or, bring them unto†
In a straight way wherein they shall not stumble:
For I am a father to Israel,
And Ephraim is my firstborn.
- 10 Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations^f,
And declare it in the isles^g afar off ; and say,
He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him,
As a shepherd doth his flock.
- 11 For the LORD hath ransomed Jacob,
And redeemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.
- 12 And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion,
And shall flow together unto the goodness of the LORD,
To the corn, and to the wine, and to the oil,
And to the young of the flock and of the herd^h :
And their soul shall be as a watered gardenⁱ ;

^a The people themselves are invited by God to rejoice in the thought that Israel is now the head, i. e. the chief, among the nations.

^b Like 'hosannah' (cf. Ps. cxviii. 25), a prayer which passes into a cry of greeting.

^c Even the frailest members of the nation.

^d Their progress would be marked by tears of penitence and by prayer.
'Lachrymae poenitentium sunt vinum angelorum' (S. Bernard).

^e As a shepherd leads his flock. Cf. Ps. xxiii. 2 ; Isa. xlix. 10.

^f The nations are bidden to tell forth God's mighty acts towards His people.

^g Or rather 'coastlands', as in Isa. xxiv. 15.

^h They first return to Mount Zion, and thence pour out in a mighty stream into a land by God's bounty blessed with a manifold fertility.

ⁱ Their best wishes are thoroughly satisfied. See ver. 14.

And they shall not sorrow any more at all.

Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, 13

And the young men and the old together :

For I will turn their mourning into joy,

And will comfort them, and make them rejoice from
their sorrow.

And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, 14

And my people shall be satisfied with my goodness,

Saith the LORD.

Rachel's grief over the exile of her sons stayed.

xxx. 15-17.

Thus saith the LORD : 15

A voice is heard in Ramah ^a,

Lamentation, and bitter weeping,

Rachel ^b weeping for her children ;

She refuseth to be comforted for her children,

Because they are not.

Thus saith the LORD : 16

Refrain thy voice from weeping,

And thine eyes from tears :

For thy work ^c shall be rewarded,

Saith the LORD ;

And they shall come again from the land of the
enemy.

And there is hope for thy latter end, 17

Saith the LORD ;

And *thy* children shall come again

To their own border.

Ephraim's penitence provokes God's fatherly love.

xxx. 18-20.

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus*. 18

Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,

As a calf unaccustomed *to the yoke* ^d :

Turn thou me, and I shall be turned ;

For thou art the LORD my God.

^a Ramah, five miles due north of Jerusalem, is very conspicuous from Anathoth. See Isa. x. 29-30.

^b Rachel, the mother of Joseph, and therefore the ancestress of Ephraim and Benjamin, is here poetically figured as mourning from her tomb near Ramah (see 1 Sam. x. 2) the loss of her descendants, who had been taken to Babylon. The adaptation by St. Matthew (ii. 17-18) to the wailing for the murdered Innocents at Bethlehem depends upon what appears to be another tradition which located the tomb near Bethlehem. See Gen. xxxv. 19; xlviii. 7 (Driver in Hastings's *D.B.*, art. 'Rachel's Grave').

^c The toils of motherhood will not be in vain.

^d Ephraim had at first rebelled as a calf not broken in. Cf. Hos. x. 11.

19 Surely after that I was turned,
 I repented ;
 And after that I was instructed,
 I smote upon my thigh ^a :
 I was ashamed, yea, even confounded,
 Because I did bear the reproach of my youth ^b.

20 Is Ephraim my dear son ?
 Is he a pleasant child ?
 For as often as I speak against him,
 I do earnestly remember him still :
 Therefore my bowels ¹ are troubled for him ;
 I will surely have mercy upon him,
 Saith the LORD.

¹ Heb
sound.

*Let the virgin of Israel prepare for her return to her
 country and her God. xxxi. 21-22.*

21 Set thee up waymarks,
 Make thee guide-posts :
 Set thine heart toward the high way,
 Even the way by which thou wentest ^c :
 Turn again, O virgin of Israel,
 Turn again to these thy cities.
 22 How long wilt thou go hither and thither,
 O thou backsliding daughter ?
 For the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth,
 A woman shall encompass a man ^d.

(3) *JUDAH'S SHARE IN THE RESTORATION.*
 xxxi. 23-26.

23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel :
 Yet again shall they use this speech
 In the land of Judah and in the cities thereof,
 When I shall ² bring again their captivity :
 The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice,
 O mountain of holiness ^e.

² Or, *re-
 turn to*

^a An action expressing astonishment or sorrow. Cf. Ezek. xxi. 12.

^b Repentance is gradual. First a prayer for better things, then contrition, lastly shame for all his past sins, a life of sin and apostasy since the childhood of the nation. To explain 'after that I was turned' as going astray from God (with Keil, &c.) violates the meaning required by the parallelism. It should be synonymous with 'after I was instructed'.

^c Set about to insure thy return home unerringly. But throughout there underlies the second thought, which only emerges clearly in the next verse, viz. their return to Jehovah. For the idea of making a special road, cf. Isa. xl. 3 ; lxii. 10.

^d Or, a woman shall embrace a man. The natural relation of the sexes is reversed. Israel will, unwooed, love and embrace her Divine Spouse.

^e Justice and holiness, morality and religion, will no longer be divorced. Cf. l. 7.

And Judah and all the cities thereof shall dwell 24
therein together ;

The husbandmen, and they that go about with
flocks ^a.

For I have satiated the weary soul, 25
And every sorrowful soul have I replenished.

Upon this I awaked, and beheld ; 26
And my sleep was sweet unto me ^b.

(4) *FEATURES BELONGING TO THE REUNITED
KINGDOM.* xxxi. 27-40.

(i) *Increase of man and beast.* xxxi. 27-28.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, 27
That I will sow the house of Israel and the house
of Judah

With the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.
And it shall come to pass, that like as I have 28
watched over them ^c

To pluck up and to break down,
And to overthrow and to destroy, and to afflict ;
So will I watch over ^c them

To build and to plant,
Saith the LORD.

(ii) *The punishment of sin will be confined to the
actual sinner.* xxxi. 29-30.

In those days they shall say no more, 29
The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children's teeth are set on edge ^d.
But every one shall die for his own iniquity : 30
Every man that eateth the sour grapes,
His teeth shall be set on edge.

(iii) *Religious doctrine will be an inward principle
of the heart.* xxxi. 31-34.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will 31
make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and
with the house of Judah :

Not according to the covenant that I made with 32

^a Better, 'as husbandmen and such as go about with flocks.' They would all, even the townsmen, return to the simple agricultural life of earlier times, when almost every man was a farmer or a shepherd.

^b The previous prophecy is regarded as a pleasant dream.

^c Lit. 'keep awake'. See i. 11-12.

^d i. e. children are punished for the sins of their fathers. Ezekiel afterwards argued at length how this proverb, at any rate as popularly understood, was at variance with God's justice (Ezek. xviii).

their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand
to bring them out of the land of Egypt ;

¹ Which my covenant they brake, although I was ² an husband unto them,

¹ Or, *Foras-
much as
they brake
my cove-
nant*

Saith the LORD.

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the
house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD ;

² Or, *lord
over them*

I will put my law in their inward parts,

And in their heart will I write it ;

And I will be their God,

And they shall be my people :

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neigh-
bour,

And every man his brother,

Saying, Know the LORD :

For they shall all know me,

From the least of them unto the greatest of them,

Saith the LORD :

For I will forgive their iniquity,

And their sin will I remember no more ^a.

(iv) *The permanence of Israel as a nation will be as
certain as the ordinances of nature.* xxxi. 35-37.

35 Thus saith the LORD,

Which giveth the sun for a light by day,

And the ordinances of the moon and of the stars
for a light by night,

Which ³ stirreth up the sea, that the waves thereof

roar ;

³ Or, *stilleth
the sea,
when &c.
See Is. li. 15*

The LORD of hosts is his name :

36 If these ordinances depart from before me, saith
the LORD,

Then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being
a nation before me for ever.

37 Thus saith the LORD :

If heaven above can be measured,

And the foundations of the earth searched out
beneath ^b,

Then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel

For all that they have done,

Saith the LORD.

^a Cf. Heb. viii. 6-13 ; x. 15-18, where this inward revelation and free forgive-
ness are spoken of as the leading principles of Christianity. See Introd., p. 46.

^b The rejection of Israel is as impossible as a complete knowledge of all
God's mighty creative work, with the further implication that Gods' dealings
with Israel are an equal proof of His almighty power.

(v) *Jerusalem extended and enlarged will become the holy city of God.* xxxi. 38-40.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananel^a unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go out straight onward unto the hill Gareb^b, and shall turn about unto Goah. And the whole valley^c of the dead bodies, and of the ashes^d, and all the fields unto the brook Kidron^d, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east^e, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

III. PROPHECIES CONNECTED WITH THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM BY NEBUCHAD-REZZAR (586 B. C.). xxxii—xxxiv.

(1) *THE PURCHASE OF LAND AT ANATHOTH A SYMBOL OF THE RESTORATION.* xxxii. 1-44.

The occasion of the purchase. xxxii. 1-5.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar^f.

Now at that time the king of Babylon's army be-² sieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard, which was in the king of Judah's house^g. For Zedekiah king of Judah had³ shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape⁴ out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and

^a At the NE. corner of Jerusalem. See Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39. The corner gate was on the NW. See 2 Kings xiv. 13.

^b Possibly 'the hill of lepers'. It was probably on the SW. of Jerusalem. Goah is unknown.

^c Even parts which had been defiled (the Valley of Hinnom, see vii. 31) would become holy to the Lord. The whole passage is very similar to Zech. xiv. 20-21.

^d The word translated brook 'means no more than a valley down which a transitory stream may flow after heavy rain' (G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. 81). The Kidron probably never was more than 'a winter or storm torrent'.

^e This 'was connected with the palace, and therefore stood near the SE. corner of the present Haram area' (*Ibid.* p. 199).

^f See 2 Kings xxv. 1-2.

^g Part of the palace court railed off. 'As still in Oriental prisons, prisoners were allowed to transact business with their friends through the rail, and receive food from the outside' (G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, ii. 258). The confinement is probably that mentioned in xxxviii. 28.

shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes ; and he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD : though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper ^a ?

The formal contract of purchase. xxxii. 6-15.

- 6 And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came
7 unto me, saying^b, Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum
thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee
my field that is in Anathoth : for the right of redemp-
8 tion is thine to buy it ^c. So Hanamel mine uncle's
son came to me in the court of the guard ^d according
to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my
field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the
land of Benjamin : for the right of inheritance is thine,
and the redemption is thine ; buy it for thyself. Then
9 I knew that this was the word of the LORD. And
I bought the field that was in Anathoth of Hanamel
mine uncle's son, and weighed him the money ^e, even
seventeen shekels of silver.
- 10 And I subscribed the deed, and sealed it, and called
witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances ^f.
- 11 So I took the deed of the purchase, both that which
was sealed, ¹ according to the law and custom, and that ¹ Or, con-
12 which was open ^g : and I delivered the deed of the pur- ^{taining the}
chase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of ^{terms and}
Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel mine uncle's ^{conditions†}
son, and in the presence of the witnesses that sub-
scribed the deed of the purchase, before all the Jews
13 that sat in the court of the guard. And I charged

^a See xxi. 10, and more especially xxxiv. 2-5.

^b This verse, compared with ver. 8, shews that an intuition and even an inward purpose was in some cases only afterwards recognised as divinely inspired. See note on Hos. i. 2.

^c By what was probably an ancient custom (see Lev. xxv. 25 ; Ruth iv. 3-6) a relative was bound to redeem land sold through stress of poverty by a poor relation. Such an action would seem absurd when all the land seemed permanently in the possession of the Chaldeans. The buying and selling by the Romans of the land on which Hannibal's camp was pitched is an interesting parallel.

^d See xxxvii. 21, and note on ver. 2.

^e Money was paid at this time by weight and not in coins. As we do not know the size of the field, no inference can be drawn from the price paid.

^f Point is made of the fact that the purchase is a real and serious transaction carried out with all legal preciseness. This procedure was probably due to Assyrian influences in Judæa.

^g On the meaning of the double deed see Driver *in loco*. In any case its object was to give greater security against loss or falsification.

Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith the LORD of 14
hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, this deed
of the purchase, both that which is sealed, and this
deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel;
that they may continue many days. For thus saith 15
the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and
fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this
land.

*Nevertheless the prophet desponds and lays his doubts
before God. xxxii. 16-25.*

Now after I had delivered the deed of the purchase 16
unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the
LORD, saying, Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made 17
the heaven and the earth by thy great power and by
thy stretched out arm; there is nothing too ¹ hard for
thee: which shewest mercy unto thousands, and re- 18
compensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom
of their children after them: the great, the mighty God,
the LORD of hosts is his name: great in counsel, and 19
mighty in work: whose eyes are open upon all the
ways of the sons of men; to give every one according
to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:
which didst set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, 20
even unto this day, ² both in Israel and among *other*
men: and madest thee a name, as at this day; and 21
didst bring forth thy people Israel out of the land of
Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong
hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with great
terror; and gavest them this land, which thou didst 22
swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with
milk and honey; and they came in, and possessed it; 23
but they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy
law; they have done nothing of all that thou com-
mandedst them to do: therefore thou hast caused all
this evil to come upon them: behold the mounts^a, 24
they are come unto the city to take it: and the city is
given into the hand of the Chaldeans that fight against
it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the
pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to
pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou hast said 25
unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for money,
and call witnesses; whereas the city is given into the
hand of the Chaldeans.

^a Earthworks of the besiegers, on which they placed themselves and their engines, here as it were personified. Cf. vi. 6; xxxiii. 4.

Jehovah's reply : Jerusalem has indeed deserved her doom. xxxii. 26-35.

- 26 Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah,
 27 saying, Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh :
 is there any thing too hard for me ?
 28 Therefore thus saith the LORD : Behold, I will give
 this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the
 hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall
 29 take it : and the Chaldeans, that fight against this city,
 shall come and set this city on fire, and burn it, with
 the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense
 unto Baal^a, and poured out drink offerings unto
 30 other gods, to provoke me to anger. For the children
 of Israel and the children of Judah have only done
 that which was evil in my sight from their youth : for
 the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger
 31 with the work of their hands, saith the LORD. For
 this city hath been to me a provocation of mine anger
 and of my fury from the day that they built it even
 unto this day ; that I should remove it from before
 32 my face : because of all the evil of the children of
 Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have
 done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their
 princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men
 33 of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And
 they have turned unto me the back, and not the face^b :
 and though I taught them, rising up early and teaching
 them, yet they have not hearkened to receive in-
 34 struction. But they set their abominations in the
 35 house which is called by my name, to defile it. And
 they built the high places of Baal, which are in the
 valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and
 their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto Molech^c ;
 which I commanded them not, neither came it into
 my¹ mind^d, that they should do this abomination ; to¹ Heb.
 cause Judah to sin. *heart.*

But God will restore His people and make an everlasting covenant with them. xxxii. 36-41.

- 36 And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of
 Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It is given

^a See note on xix. 13.

^b Cf. ii. 27.

^c Probably to be identified with the Phœnician Molech from whose cult the child-sacrifices of Molech were borrowed. See vii. 30 ; 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

^d See note on vii. 31.

into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: Behold, I ³⁷ will gather them out of all the countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath: and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and ³⁸ they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and ³⁹ I will give them one heart and one way^a, that they may fear me for ever; for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an ever-⁴⁰ lasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away¹ from them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I ⁴¹ will plant them in this land² assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul^b.

¹ Heb. *from after them.*

² Heb. *in truth.*

Land will again be bought and sold. xxxii. 42-44.

For thus saith the LORD: Like as I have brought all ⁴² this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And ⁴³ fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate, without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for ⁴⁴ money, and subscribe the deeds, and seal them, and call witnesses, in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the hill country, and in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South^c: for I will cause their captivity to return,

Saith the LORD.

2. *RENEWED PROMISES OF THE RESTORATION.*
xxxiii.

The repair of the breaches and promise of pardon.
xxxiii. 1-9.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah ³³ the second time, while he was yet shut up in the court of the guard^d, saying,

Thus saith the LORD that doeth it, 2
The LORD that formeth it to establish it;
The LORD is his name:

^a One right road of life.

^b God would act with the wholeheartedness, the want of which had been at the bottom of Israel's sin.

^c See note on xiii. 19. We have in this verse a comprehensive description of the whole territory of Judah and Benjamin.

^d See note on xxxii. 2.

- 3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee,
And will shew thee great things, and ¹ difficult, ¹ Heb.
Which thou knowest not. *fenced in.*
- 4 For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning
the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of
the kings of Judah, which are broken down *to make*
a defence against the mounts, and against the sword :
- 5 They ^a come to fight with the Chaldeans,
But it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men,
Whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury,
And for all whose wickedness I have hid my face
from this city.
- 6 Behold, I will bring it ² health and cure, ² Or,
And I will cure them ; *healing*
And I will reveal unto them abundance of peace
and truth.
- 7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the
captivity of Israel to return,
And will build them, as at the first.
- 8 And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity,
Whereby they have sinned against me ;
And I will pardon all their iniquities,
Whereby they have sinned against me,
And whereby they have transgressed against me.
- 9 And *this city* shall be to me for a name of joy, for
a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the
earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto
them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and
for all the peace that I procure unto it.

*The waste places of Jerusalem and Judah will once again
be scenes of joy and prosperity. xxxiii. 10-13.*

- 10 Thus saith the LORD :
Yet again there shall be heard in this place,
Whereof ye say, It is waste, without man and
without beast,
Even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of
Jerusalem,
That are desolate, without man and without
inhabitant and without beast,
- 11 The voice of joy and the voice of gladness,

^a If the text is correct, this verse should probably be explained as parenthetical, Jeremiah reminding the people of the utter uselessness of their attempting to ward off God's just punishment. Such resistance to the Chaldeans only increased the disaster. Ver. 6 continues the thought of ver. 4. The demolished houses would be again restored, and the breach healed.

The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of
the bride^a,

The voice of them that say,

Give thanks to the LORD of hosts,

For the LORD is good,

For his mercy *endureth* for ever :

And of them that bring *sacrifices* of thanks-
giving into the house of the LORD.

For I will cause the captivity of the land to return
as at the first,

Saith the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts :

12

Yet again shall there be in this place,

Which is waste, without man and without beast,

And in all the cities thereof,

An habitation of shepherds causing their flocks^b
to lie down.

In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the 13
lowland,

And in the cities of the South, and in the land of
Benjamin,

And in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities
of Judah,

Shall the flocks again pass under the hands of him
that telleth^c them,

Saith the LORD.

*The promised perpetuity of the Davidic kingship and
the Levitical priesthood.* xxxiii. 14-18^d.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD,

14

That I will perform that good word which I have
spoken

Concerning the house of Israel

And concerning the house of Judah^e.

In those days, and at that time,

15

Will I cause a¹ Branch of righteousness to grow up
unto David ;

† See
ch. xxiii. 5.

^a Cf. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10.

^b See note on xxxi. 24. Cf. Isa. vii. 20 ff.

^c i. e. counteth, as in Gen. xv. 5.

^d The whole section, 14-26, is omitted in the LXX, and some doubt has there-
fore been thrown on its genuineness, but it is quite in the style of Jeremiah, and
the variations in ver. 16, as compared with xxiii. 6, and the difficulty of reconciling
15-16 with the perpetuity of the kingly office in ver. 17, may have had
something to do with its omission.

^e Apparently a distinct reference to xxiii. 5-6, from which verses 15-16 are
repeated with slight alterations. On the genuineness of this passage see
previous note.

And he shall execute judgement and righteousness
in the land.

- 16 In those days shall Judah be saved,
And Jerusalem ^a shall dwell safely :
And this is *the name* whereby she shall be called,

¹ The LORD is our righteousness ^b.

¹ See
ch. xxiii. 6.†

- 17 For thus saith the LORD :

² David shall never want a man
To sit upon the throne of the house of Israel ^c ;

² Heb.
*There shall
not be cut
off from
David.*

- 18 Neither shall the priests the Levites ^d want a man
before me
To offer burnt offerings,
And to burn ³ oblations,
And to do sacrifice continually.

³ Or, *meal
offerings* †

This promise was as sure as the ordinances of nature.

xxxiii. 19-26.

- 19 And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah,
saying,

- 20 Thus saith the LORD :

If ye can break my covenant of the day,
And my covenant of the night,
So that there should not be day and night in
their season ;

- 21 Then may also my covenant be broken with David
my servant,
That he should not have a son to reign upon his
throne ;

And with the Levites the priests ^e, my ministers.

- 22 As the host of heaven cannot be numbered,
Neither the sand of the sea measured ;
So will I multiply the seed of David my servant,
And the Levites that minister unto me.

- 23 And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

- 24 Considerest thou not what this people have spoken,
saying, The two families which the LORD did choose,
he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my

^a Altered from 'Israel' in xxiii. 6, as more appropriate to a prophecy dealing with Judah.

^b See note on xxiii. 6. There the name is given to the king: here to the city.

^c Jeremiah here sees the Messianic kingship not in a single Royal and Priestly Person but in a perpetual line of Davidic Kings and Levitical Priests. What presented itself most vividly to the prophet's view was, as a rule, not so much the personality as the perfect character of the ideal King.

^d The 'priests the Levites' is the regular expression for the priests of Jerusalem at this time. See Deut. xvii. 9, 18, &c.

^e See note on ver. 18, and cf. xxxi. 35, 36.

people, that they should be no more a nation before them^a.

Thus saith the LORD :

25

If my covenant of day and night *stand* not,
If I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven
and earth ;

Then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, and 26
of David my servant,

So that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over
the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob :

For I will ¹cause their captivity to return,
And will have mercy on them.

Or, re-
turn to
their cap-
tivity

(3) *THE DESTINY OF ZEDEKIAH FORETOLD.*

xxxiv. 1-7.

The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, **34**
when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his
army, and all the kingdoms of the earth that were
under his dominion, and all the peoples, fought against
Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying ^b :
Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Go, and ²
speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus
saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the
hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it
with fire : and thou shalt not escape out of his hand, ³
but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand ;
and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of
Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to
mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. Yet hear ⁴
the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah :
thus saith the LORD concerning thee, Thou shalt not
die by the sword ; thou shalt die in peace ; and with ⁵
the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which
were before thee, so shall they ²make a burning for
thee ^c ; and they shall lament thee, *saying*, Ah lord ^d !
for I have spoken the word, saith the LORD. Then ⁶
Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto

† ² See
2 Chr. xvi.
14, xxi. 19.

^a We should probably read with LXX, &c. 'before ME'. Though Jews themselves, by thus doubting Jehovah's intention to save Israel and Judah they are despising God's holy people and speaking in a tone more natural in the mouths of foreigners.

^b This prophecy appears to have been uttered at the commencement of the siege, before Jeremiah was imprisoned. It follows closely upon xxi. Cf. xxxii. 4.

^c The burning of sweet spices customary at the burial of kings. See references in margin.

^d They would use the accustomed dirge. See note on xxii. 18. Jeremiah means that he would be buried with due regal honours.

7 Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish^a and against Azekah; for these *alone* remained of the cities of Judah *as* fenced cities.

(4) *A PROPHECY DIRECTED AGAINST THOSE WHO HAD BROKEN A PROMISE TO RELEASE THEIR SLAVES.* xxxiv. 8-22.

The occasion of the prophecy. xxxiv. 8-11.

8 The word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them; that every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, *to wit*, of a Jew his
10 brother: and all the princes and all the people obeyed, which had entered into the covenant, that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more; they obeyed, and let them
11 go^b: but afterwards they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids:

Their conduct was not only a breach of good faith but a violation of God's laws. xxxiv. 12-16.

12 Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah
13 from the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of
14 Egypt, out of the house of ¹ bondage, saying, At the¹ Heb. end of seven years ye shall let go every man his ^{bondmen}. brother that is an Hebrew, which ² hath been sold^{†2} Or, hath unto thee, and hath served thee six years, thou shalt let ^{sold him-} self him go free from thee^c: but your fathers hearkened

^a Lachish and Azekah were both strongholds in the lowlands of Judah to the SW. of Jerusalem, and therefore lay in the direction of Egypt.

^b It would seem that they had made this agreement in a panic when Nebuchadrezzar was outside the walls of Jerusalem (no doubt hoping that the liberated slaves would help in the defence of the city), and broken it when his departure in consequence of the Egyptian expedition gave them a respite. See verses 21, 22, and xxxvii. 5.

^c See Exod. xxi. 1-4; Deut. xv. 12. The law only applied to Hebrew slaves. At what was probably a later date (Lev. xxv. 39-41) the slavery of a Hebrew

not unto me, neither inclined their ear. And ye ¹⁵ were now turned, and had done that which is right in mine eyes, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name:

But ye turned and profaned my name, and caused ¹⁶ every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom ye had let go free at their pleasure, to return; and ye brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.

Their punishment would be an emancipation to destruction. xxxiv. 17-22.

[†] Or, a
terror unto

¹ Heb. *the calf which they cut &c.*

Therefore thus saith the LORD: Ye have not heark- ¹⁷ ened unto me, to proclaim liberty, every man to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim unto you a liberty, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be ¹ tossed to and fro ^a among all the kingdoms of the earth. And I will give the men that ¹⁸ have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before me, ² when they cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof ^b; the princes of ¹⁹ Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; I will even give ²⁰ them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. And Zedekiah king ²¹ of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you ^c. Behold, I will ²² command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant.

was altogether forbidden, and this passage seems to imply a growing feeling against it.

^a See note on xv. 4.

^b An evident allusion to an ancient custom by which the parties to a covenant passed between the divided parts of a victim. Cf. Gen. xv. 10, 17.

^c See xxxvii. 5.

Part VII.

PROPHECIES CHIEFLY CONNECTED WITH HISTORICAL INCIDENTS, PROBABLY TAKEN MAINLY FROM A BIOGRAPHY OF JEREMIAH. xxxv—xl.

I. A LESSON FROM THE RECHABITES.

xxxv.

Their loyal obedience to their ancestor. xxxv. 1-11.

35 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites ^a, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink. Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites; and I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan ^b the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the ¹ door: and I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups, and I ^{Heb. threshold.} said unto them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye sojourn. And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done

^a The Rechabites were a branch of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55) connected with the Midianites. They had by custom and principle continued the simple nomad life of their forefathers. This was understood to have been enjoined by their ancestor Jonadab, who was a contemporary of Jehu (2 Kings x. 15 ff). They had been driven into Jerusalem for protection because of the invasion (see ver. 11). They would pitch their black tents on such open spaces as they would find within the walls.

^b An otherwise unknown prophet (the phrase 'man of God' applies to Hanan); an interesting fact, as shewing that there was at least one other true prophet on friendly terms with Jeremiah.

according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king ¹¹ of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians ^a; so we dwell at Jerusalem.

The contrasted conduct of the Jews. XXXV. 12-17.

Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, ¹² saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of ¹³ Israel: Go, and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD. The ¹⁴ words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed, and unto this day they drink none, for they obey their father's commandment: but I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking; and ye have not hearkened unto me. I have sent also unto you all my ¹⁵ servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. Foras- ¹⁶ much as the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father which he commanded them, but this people hath not hearkened unto me; therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of ¹⁷ hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

The Rechabites will be rewarded for their obedience.

XXXV. 18-19.

And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, ¹⁸ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he commanded you; there- ¹⁹ fore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

^a The land was overrun by Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. See 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

II. THE BURNING OF THE ROLL. xxxvi.

Baruch is commissioned to write and read the prophecies of Jeremiah. xxxvi. 1-8.

36 And it came to pass in the fourth year ^a of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came ² unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book ^b, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto ³ thee ^c, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may for-
⁴give their iniquity and their sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.
⁵ And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am ¹ shut ¹ Or, *restrained†*
⁶ up ^d; I cannot go into the house of the LORD: there-fore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon ² the fast ² Or, *a fast day*
⁷ day ^e: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities ^f. It may be ³ they ³ Heb. *their supplica-tion will fall.*
will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced
⁸ against this people. And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet com-manded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

^a The date connects this incident very closely with the preceding prophecy. See note on xxxv. 11.

^b The roll probably contained the earliest recension of chs. i-xx. See *Introd.*, pp. 44, 45.

^c i. e. the thirteenth year of Josiah. See i. 2.

^d i. e. hindered (see marg.) either by illness or, more probably, as the next clause seems to imply, by some ceremonial uncleanness.

^e i. e. probably the special fast day 'proclaimed' in the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim (see ver. 9). If so, the direction is here mentioned by anticipation. But the marginal rendering may be what is intended.

^f This does not mean two separate readings of the prophecies (see ver. 8), but that the occasion would imply a general meeting of those in the provinces as well as the inhabitants of Jerusalem. See note on vii. 2.

Their rehearsal in the Temple to all the people.

xxxvi. 9-10.

Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month ^a, that all the people in Jerusalem, and all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem, proclaimed ^b a fast ^c before the LORD. Then read ¹⁰ Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe ^d, in the upper court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house, in the ears of all the people.

They are read again before the princes. xxxvi. 11-19.

And when Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of ¹¹ Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD, he went down into the king's house, into ¹² the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there, even Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. Then Micaiah declared ¹³ unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people. There- ¹⁴ fore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them. And they said unto him, Sit down now, ¹⁵ and read it in our ears. So Baruch read it in their ears. Now it came to pass, when they had heard all ¹⁶ the words, they turned in fear one toward another, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words. And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell ¹⁷ us now, How didst thou write all these words at his

^a See note on ver. 22.

^b Probably an inexact expression. The fast is proclaimed by authority, and the people from all parts assemble to keep it.

^c A special fast appointed, perhaps, to avert the evil which threatened them from Nebuchadrezzar.

^d Shaphan, who had been closely associated with the discovery of the law-book and the reform in Josiah's reign (2 Kings xxiii. 3-14) was himself probably dead. Elishama was now the scribe or Secretary of State (ver. 12). The family of Shaphan were always kindly disposed to Jeremiah. See xxvi. 24; xxxix. 14.

^e A council was being held in the official chamber of Elishama the chief Secretary.

18 mouth^a? Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth,
 19 and I wrote them with ink in the book. Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be.

Jehudi begins to read them to the king, who in anger destroys the roll. xxxvi. 20-26.

20 And they went in to the king into the court; but they had laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe; and they told all the words in the ears of the
 21 king. So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of the chamber of Elishama the scribe. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.
 22 Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month^b: and *there was a fire in* the brasier burning
 23 before him. And it came to pass, when Jehudi had read three or four^c leaves^c, that *the king* cut it with¹ Or, columns[†]
 the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brasier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire
 24 that was in the brasier^d. And they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of
 25 his servants that heard all these words. Moreover Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll:
 26 but he would not hear them. And the king commanded Jerahmeel² the king's son, and Seraiah the² Or, the son of Ham-melech
 son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

^a The words 'at his mouth' have probably got into the text from the next verse, where the Hebrew is the same. They are omitted in LXX. The princes wished to know whether they were obtained by dictation or from memory.

^b From this verse we may gather that the Jews had, probably through Assyrian influence, already adopted the Babylonian Kalendar, according to which the year began a little before the spring equinox. The old Israelitish year began at the end of autumn. See Exod. xxiii. 16; xxxiv. 22. The time would have been towards the end of November, or the beginning of December.

^c Jewish books were written on rolls (rolled up round a piece of wood like a map), still used in synagogues, the writing being in two divisions, or columns, across the roll, and divided into blocks. Two such blocks were called 'doors'.

^d Rooms were heated by a brasier or firepan in the middle, and the smoke had to escape as best it could, as there was no chimney. See *H.D.B.*, vol. ii, p. 318.

The severe denunciation of Jehoiakim. xxxvi. 27-31.

Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after 27
that the king had burned the roll, and the words which
Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take 28
thee again another roll, and write in it all the former
words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the
king of Judah hath burned. And concerning Jehoi- 29
akim king of Judah thou shalt say, Thus saith the
LORD: Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast
thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall
certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause
to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus 30
saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah:

He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David:

And his dead body shall be cast out

In the day to the heat,

And in the night to the frost.

And I will punish him and his seed and his servants 31
for their iniquity;

And I will bring upon them,

And upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem,

And upon the men of Judah,

All the evil that I have pronounced against them,
But they hearkened not.

The prophecies, with many additions, are rewritten.

xxxvi. 32.

Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch 32
the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from
the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which
Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and
there were added besides unto them many like words ^a.

III. INCIDENTS CONCERNING JEREMIAH'S PERSONAL HISTORY DURING THE FINAL SIEGE OF JERUSALEM. xxxvii—xxxix.

(1) ZEDEKIAH SENDS A MISSION TO JEREMIAH.

xxxvii. 1-10.

A note on the accession and conduct of Zedekiah

(597-586 B.C.). xxxvii. 1-2.

†¹ See And Zedekiah^b the son of Josiah reigned as king, 37
ch. xxii. 24. instead of ¹ Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebu-

^a The new roll probably agrees very nearly with our present recension of
chs. i-xx. See *Intro.*, p. 45.

^b Jehoiachin's uncle. See 2 Kings xxiv. 17.

chadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of
2 Judah. But neither he, nor his servants, nor the
people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the
LORD, which he spake by the prophet Jeremiah.

*The occasion of the mission—the raising of the siege in
consequence of the approach of an Egyptian auxiliary
force. xxxvii. 3-5.*

3 And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shele-
miah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest,
to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the
4 LORD our God for us. Now Jeremiah came in and
went out among the people: for they had not put him
5 into prison. And Pharaoh's army was come forth out
of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged
Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they brake up from
Jerusalem.

*Jeremiah foretells the return of the Chaldeans.
xxxvii. 6-10.*

6 Then came the word of the LORD unto the prophet
7 Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God of
Israel: Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent
you unto me to inquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army,
which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt
8 into their own land. And the Chaldeans shall come
again, and fight against this city; and they shall take
9 it, and burn it with fire^a. Thus saith the LORD:
Deceive not¹ yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall¹ Heb. *your*
10 surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. For^{souls.}
though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chal-
deans that fight against you, and there remained but
² wounded men among them, yet should they rise up² Heb.
every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire^b. *thrust*
through.

(2) *THE ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT OF
JEREMIAH. xxxvii. 11-21.*

*The prophet's maltreatment on a false suspicion of
treason. xxxvii. 11-15.*

11 And it came to pass that when the army of the Chal-
deans was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of
12 Pharaoh's army, then Jeremiah went forth out of

^a Cf. xxxiv. 21, 22.

^b So certain is the event that even if you succeeded in destroying all the Chaldeans except a few lying wounded in their tents, they would rise up and carry out God's judgements against Jerusalem.

† Heb.
from
thence.

Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to receive his portion ¹ there ^a, in the midst of the people. And ¹³ when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward was there, whose name was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah : and he laid hold on Jeremiah the prophet, saying, 'Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah, It is false ; I fall ¹⁴ not away to the Chaldeans ; but he hearkened not to him : so Irijah laid hold on Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. And the princes were wroth with ¹⁵ Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe ; for they had made that the prison ^b.

The king's interview and friendly dealings with Jeremiah. xxxvii. 16-21.

² Or, house
of the pit

When Jeremiah was come into the ² dungeon house ^c, ¹⁶ and into the cells, and Jeremiah had remained there many days ; then Zedekiah the king sent, and fetched ¹⁷ him : and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there any word from the LORD ? And Jeremiah said, There is. He said also, Thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon. Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, Wherein ¹⁸ have I sinned against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison ? Where now are your prophets which prophesied unto ¹⁹ you, saying, 'The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land ? And now hear, ²⁰ I pray thee, O my lord the king : let my supplication, ²¹ I pray thee, ^d be accepted before thee ; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there ^d. Then Zedekiah the king commanded, and they committed Jeremiah into the court of the guard, and they gave him daily a loaf of bread out of the bakers' street ^e, until all the bread in the

^a These words are quite indefinite ; lit. 'to receive a portion' (perhaps an inheritance) 'from there'. The words 'in the midst of the people' have in these chapters the meaning of 'being at large', in contrast to being in prison as in ver. 4. They are here best taken with 'to go', and probably mean that Jeremiah went to his home without thought of danger.

^b Probably because the other 'prisons' were now full of political prisoners.

^c See note on xxxviii. 6.

^d i.e. probably from damp and lack of food.

^e 'The tower of the ovens', which was probably in this street (Neh. iii. 11 ; xii. 38). Different trades appear to have had each their special quarter. Thus we read of the 'fish gate', Neh. xii. 39 ; the 'sheep gate', Neh. iii. 1.

city was spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

(3) *WHAT FOLLOWED A FURTHER CONSPIRACY AGAINST JEREMIAH.* xxxviii.

The prophet's enemies procure a cruel incarceration.

xxxviii. 1-6.

38 And Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah, heard the words ² that Jeremiah spake unto all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD, He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence : but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey, and he ³ shall live. Thus saith the LORD, This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king ⁴ of Babylon, and he shall take it. Then the princes said unto the king, Let this man, we pray thee, be put to death ; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them ^a : for this man seeketh not the welfare of this ⁵ people, but the hurt ^b. And Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand : for the king is not he ⁶ that can do any thing against you. Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the ¹ dungeon ^c of ¹ Or, *pit* Malchiah ² the king's son, that was in the court of ² Or, *the son of Hammelech* the guard : and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire : and Jeremiah sank in the mire.

His rescue by an Ethiopian eunuch. xxxviii. 7-13.

7 Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, an eunuch ^d, which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon ; the king then sitting

^a In the court of the guard Jeremiah would constantly come in contact with the soldiers, and his words must have had the effect of discouraging resistance and encouraging deserters. They were only justifiable on the ground of his strong religious conviction. The last part of the charge was, of course, untrue.

^b An acknowledgement of weakness both of character and official position.

^c Some commentators here render 'cistern', but the word pit is frequently applied to a dungeon, as in Gen. xl. 15 ; xli. 14 ; Exod. xii. 29. In the latter passage the phrase 'house of the pit' is identical with that in xxxvii. 16. Even in mediæval times dungeons were often very damp and miry. Cf. Ps. lxix.

^d The law which forbade mutilation to a Hebrew (Deut. xxiii. 1) may account for a foreigner at court in this capacity.

¹ Heb. *he is dead.*

in the gate of Benjamin^a; Ebed-melech went forth 8 out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that 9 they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and ¹ he is like to die in the place where he is because of the famine: for there is no more bread in the city. Then the king com- 10 manded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty^b men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and 11 went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said 12 unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords^c. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah 13 with the cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

Zedekiah privately consults the prophet again, who once more counsels surrender. xxxviii. 14-23.

Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the 14 prophet unto him into the third entry that is in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing^d; hide nothing from me. Then 15 Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare it unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, thou wilt not hearken unto me. So 16 Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, As the LORD liveth, that made us this soule, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life. Then said 17 Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire: and thou shalt live, and thine house: but if thou wilt not 18 go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall

^a Zedekiah was probably holding a council of war. See note on Amos v. 12.

^b Many commentators have, chiefly on grammatical grounds, substituted three (but see Keil). The larger number may have been necessary in case of resistance by the princes.

^c i. e. between the armpits and the cords.

^d The nature of the question is implied in the answer given in verses 17 ff. i. e. to whom we owe our very existence.

this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape
 19 out of their hand. And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen away to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand,
 20 and they mock me ^a. But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, in that which I speak unto thee : so it shall
 21 be well with thee, and thy soul shall live. But if thou refuse to go forth, this is the word that the LORD hath
 22 shewed me : Behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house shall be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say,

¹ Thy familiar friends ^b have ² set thee on,

And have prevailed over thee :

Now that thy feet are sunk in the mire,

They ^c are turned away back.

23 And they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans : and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon : and ³ thou shalt cause this city to be
 burned with fire ^d.

¹ Heb. *The men of thy peace.*

² Or, *deceived thee*

³ Heb. *thou shalt burn &c.*

The equivocation by which the purpose of the interview is disguised. xxxviii. 24-28 a.

24 Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know
 25 of these words, and thou shalt not die. But if the princes hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king ; hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death : also what
 26 the king said unto thee : then thou shalt say unto them, I ⁴ presented my supplication before the king, that he
 would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to
 die there.

27 Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him : and he told them according to all these words

^a Zedekiah was afraid of being insulted, and perhaps maltreated by the deserters, to whose policy he had been violently opposed, and who may, like Jeremiah, have suffered at the hands of the party of resistance.

^b Zedekiah's friends urged him on and over-persuaded him, and when he was in perplexity left him to his fate. In this dirge-song of the women we have perhaps an allusion to Zedekiah's fears in ver. 19. He who feared the mockery of his enemies would be mocked by his own women-servants.

^c The friends who, having lured him on, leave him in his difficulties.

^d i.e. thou shalt be responsible for its being burnt ; but probably we should read with the versions, ' this city shall be burnt '.

that the king had commanded. So they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not ¹perceived^a.
 † Or, reported
 So Jeremiah abode in the court of the guard until the 28 day that Jerusalem was taken.

(4) *THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM AND HER FATE.* xxxviii. 28 b—xxxix^b.

A Chaldean council is held in Jerusalem.

xxxviii. 28 b—xxxix. 3.

And it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken.

* * * *

† See ch. lii. 4, &c., 2 Kings xxv. 1-12.
² (in the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the 39 tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and besieged it; in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, ² the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city:)

* * * *

that all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, ³ and sat in the middle gate^c, even Nergal-sharezer^d,

^a i. e. the real object of the interview was not told them. See margin.

¹ This chapter, with xl. 1-6, is obviously a compilation from different sources not very successfully welded together.

1. In xxxix. 1-2, 4-10 we have extracts from 2 Kings xxv. 1-12 (Jer. lii. 4-16), closely following the purer text of Jeremiah.

2. In 15-18 there is a prophecy concerning Ebed-melech which would more naturally have followed xxxviii. 13.

3. In what remains we find what, at first sight at any rate, appear to be two inconsistent accounts of the dealings with Jeremiah immediately after the siege.

(a) According to the first, xxxix. 3 and 14, a council sits at Jerusalem, which immediately, it would seem, hands over Jeremiah as a free man to the protection of Gedaliah.

(b) According to the second, xxxix. 11-13, which is continued in substance, though not contextually in xl. 1-6, Nebuzaradan (in accordance with an express direction from Nebuchadrezzar, having first held a council and taken off Jeremiah in chains to Ramah with the other prisoners) gives him the option of going to Babylon or returning home. He chooses the latter (see note on xl. 5), and places himself under Gemaliah's charge.

This analysis is, to some extent only, supported by LXX, which omits xxxix. 4-10, 11-13, but contains 1, 2, xl. 1-6. In other words, in addition to (a) it contains one of the extracts from 2 Kings and one from (b). The two accounts (a) and (b) are not necessarily inconsistent, if we suppose that the first in ver. 14 epitomises what is described more fully and accurately in the second, xl. 1-6. But it is quite possible to explain the whole as a very much abridged and revised extract from the biography. Both contain the very characteristic phrase 'among the people'.

^c Probably on the north wall.

^d Nergal-sharezer was probably the Rab-mag (a title of uncertain meaning) Neriglissar, son-in-law of Nebuchadrezzar, who, after murdering Evil-merodach, the late king's son and successor, seized the crown. The text of the earlier part of the verse is evidently corrupt; cf. ver. 13, where the name of the Rab-saris (chamberlain) is given as Nebushazban.

Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, ¹ Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, ¹ Titles of officers.†
¹ Rab-mag, with all the rest of the princes of the king
 of Babylon.

Flight and cruel treatment of Zedekiah. xxxix. 4-7.

- 4 And it came to pass that when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls^a: and he went out the way of the Arabah.
 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he ² gave judgement upon him.² Heb. ^{spake}
 6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes^b: also the king of Babylon ^{judgements}
^{with him.}
 7 slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon. ^{See ch. xii. 1}

The Chaldeans' treatment of Jerusalem and its inhabitants. xxxix. 8-10.

- 8 And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the
 9 walls of Jerusalem. Then Nebuzaradan the ³ captain ³ See Gen. xxxvii. 36.
 of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the residue of the people that remained in the city, the deserters also, that fell away to him, and the
 10 residue of the people^c that remained. But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

Nebuchadrezzar's kindness to Jeremiah^d. xxxix. 11-14.

- 11 Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of

^a 'They might be,' says G. A. Smith, 'the south wall above Hinnom, and the east wall across the Tyropean, which meet at the south-east angle, and the gate between the two walls would be an appropriate name for the great gate that Dr. Bliss discovered at the angle' (*Jerusalem*, vol. i, p. 226).

^b The last thing he saw was the murder of his two sons. Cf. xxxiv. 3.

^c An error for 'artificers' (cf. lii. 15 mg.). All the people in Jerusalem were taken off and the poor country folk left behind to keep the land in cultivation.

^d Verses 11-13 have by many commentators been regarded as an interpolation, chiefly because of their not being in the LXX, and the clumsy sequence of 3, 4, and 13, 14. But see note at the beginning of the chapter.

the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, ¹² and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee. So Nebuzaradan the captain of ¹³ the guard sent, and Nebushazban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon^a; they sent, and took Jeremiah ¹⁴ out of the court of the guard, and committed him unto Gedaliah^b the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people^c.

Ebed-melech is promised protection^d. xxxix. 15-18.

¹ Or, shall
he before
thee

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, ¹⁵ while he was shut up in the court of the guard, saying, Go, and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, ¹⁶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they ¹ shall be accomplished before thee in that day. But I will deliver thee in ¹⁷ that day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For ¹⁸ I will surely save thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee^e: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

(5) *EVENTS CONNECTED WITH JEREMIAH
AFTER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.* xl—xliv.

*An extract shewing how Jeremiah had come to be a free
man under the protection of Gedaliah.* xl. 1-6.

The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, ⁴⁰ after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in chains^f among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon. And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, ² and said unto him, The LORD thy God pronounced

^a This appears to be the same council as in verse 3, where see note. See also note at the beginning of the chapter.

^b This seems to be an anticipation of the events recorded in xl. 6. See note at the beginning of the chapter. Gedaliah was 'a man of a generous, genial nature, such as might have rallied the better spirits of his countrymen round him, and taken the place of the fallen dynasty' (Stanley, *Jewish Church*, ii. 474).

^c i. e. at large. See xxxvii. 4, 12, &c.

^d This prophecy was probably uttered soon after Jeremiah was taken up out of the dungeon by Ebed-melech. See xxxviii. 13.

^e Thou shalt save at least thy life. Cf. xxi. 9, 10.

^f For the apparent inconsistency of this account with xxxix. 14 see note at the beginning of xxxix.

3 this evil upon this place : and the LORD hath brought it, and done according as he spake ; because ye have sinned ^a against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which are upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come, and I will look well unto thee ; but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear : behold, all the land is before thee ; whither it seemeth good and ⁵ ¹ convenient unto thee to go, thither go. Now while ¹ Or, he was not yet gone back ^b, Go back then, *said he*, to ^{right} [†] Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people ^c : or go wheresoever it seemeth ¹ convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave ⁶ him ² victuals and a present, and let him go. Then ² Or, an ^{allowance} went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah ^d the son of Ahikam to Mizpah ^e, and dwelt with him among the people ^c that were left in the land.

Gedaliah receives the scattered Jews from the surrounding country, counsels submission to Babylon, and peaceful cultivation of the soil. xl. 7-12.

7 ³ Now when all the captains of the forces which were ³ See in the fields ^f, even they and their men, heard that ² Kings ^{xxv. 23, 24.†} the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, ⁴ and of the ¹ Or, even [†] poorest of the land, of them that were not carried ⁸ away captive to Babylon ; then they came ^g to Gedaliah to Mizpah ; even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and

^a Nebuzaradan identifies Jeremiah with the people as a whole.

^b Probably a reviser's interpolation destroying the balance of Nebuzaradan's speech, which otherwise would mean, 'Go to Babylon with me or not, as you please, or go back to Gedaliah, or anywhere else that you like.'

^c i. e. as a free man. See xxxvii. 4, 12 ; xxxix. 14, &c.

^d See note on xxxix. 14. He was Jeremiah's steadfast and brave friend, just as Ahikam his father had been. See xxvi. 24.

^e Mizpah stands on a ridge to the north-west of Jerusalem and is very conspicuous from the city which it overlooks. Asa had fortified it to protect the capital from the Northern Kingdom. See xli. 9 ; 1 Kings xv. 22 ; 2 Chron. xvi. 6.

^f i. e. in the country. They were soldiers who had fled for safety from the invading army and had evidently little faith in Zedekiah or the defences of Jerusalem.

^g In order to put themselves under his authority and perhaps learn his policy

Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite^a, and Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men. And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to stand^b before the Chaldeans, which shall come unto us^c: but ye, gather ye wine and summer fruits and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken^c. Likewise when all the Jews that^d were in Moab, and among the children of Ammon, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan; then all the^e Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven^d, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

Gedaliah, warned of Ishmael's treachery, refuses to believe it. xl. 13-16.

Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the^f captains of the forces that were in the fields^e, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, and said unto him, Dost^f thou know that Baalis the king of the children of Ammon hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take thy life? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. Then Johanan the son of Kareah^g spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know it: wherefore should he take thy life, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant of Judah perish^h? But Gedaliah the son 16

^a Netophah was a village near Bethlehem. (1 Chron. ii. 54; Neh. vii. 26.)

^b i. e. to represent the interests of the Jews before the Chaldean authorities.

^c Or 'that ye shall take'. Gedaliah bids them settle down to the joys and profits of an agricultural life, or live in what cities they chose to take possession of, without fear of molestation.

^d Cf. xvi. 15; xxiii. 3, 8. Possibly the biographer saw in the circumstance at least a partial fulfilment of those prophecies.

^e Johanan was evidently the most influential of the military party at this time. Ishmael appears to have had very few adherents.

^f Johanan feared that the murder of Gedaliah, the nominee and friend of

of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.

Ishmael's sanguinary conspiracy ^a. xli. 1-10.

- 41 ¹ Now it came to pass in the seventh month ^b, that ¹ See
Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, ² Kings
of the seed royal, and *one of* the chief officers of the xxv. 25. †
king, and ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the
son of Ahikam to Mizpah ^c; and there they did eat
² bread together in Mizpah. Then arose Ishmael the
son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with
him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son
of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the
king of Babylon had made governor over the land.
³ Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him,
even with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans
⁴ that were found there, even the men of war ^d. And
it came to pass the second day after he had slain
⁵ Gedaliah, and no man knew it, that there came cer-
tain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria,
even fourscore men, having their beards shaven and
their clothes rent, and having cut themselves ^e, with
² oblations and frankincense in their hand, to bring : Or, *meal*
⁶ them to the house of the LORD. And Ishmael the *offerings*
son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet
them, weeping all along as he went ^f: and it came to
pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to
⁷ Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. And it was so, when
they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the
son of Nethaniah slew them ^g, and cast them into the

the Chaldeans, would deprive them of the protection of that power, and render them liable to their vengeance. See xli. 18.

^a The Fast of Gedaliah (Tisri 3), commemorating the assassination of the Jewish viceroy, is still observed in orthodox synagogues. See Oesterley and Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, pp. 325, 404.

^b See note on xxxvi. 22. Only three months had passed since the capture of Jerusalem.

^c i. e. ostensibly on a friendly visit. Ishmael had already acknowledged his authority. See xl. 8.

^d This slaughter of the Chaldeans makes it likely that the motive of the Ammonites at all events was political, though Ishmael himself was probably influenced by jealousy.

^e Shewing what were common signs of mourning. See Lev. xix. 27, 28. This was probably a pilgrimage of sorrow to the ruined Temple.

^f Ishmael pretended to join them in their grief.

^g It is not very easy to see the object of this butchery. Possibly it was mere robbery, or Ishmael may have feared that it would lead to a premature discovery of his first crime.

midst of the pit, he, and the men that were with him. But ten men were found among them that said unto 8 Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have stores hidden in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey^a. So he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren. Now the pit wherein Ishmael cast 9 all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, by the side of Gedaliah^b, (the same was that which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel,) Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with them that were slain. Then Ishmael carried away 10 captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the children of Ammon.

Johanan rescues the captives, and they prepare for flight into Egypt. xli. 11-18.

But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the 11 captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, then they took all the men, and went to fight with 12 Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that are in Gibeon^c. Now it came to 13 pass that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, then they were glad. So all the people that Ishmael had carried away 14 captive from Mizpah cast about^d and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah. But Ishmael 15 the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the children of Ammon. Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the cap- 16 tains of the forces that were with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after that he had

^a Stores of this kind were kept in subterranean storehouses, with the openings concealed for fear of robbery. See Keil.

^b LXX omits these, and reads 'this was the ^{or a} great well (or perhaps pit) which Asa', &c. Cf. 1 Kings xv. 22. The reference is probably not to Gedaliah and the men slain with him, but to his recent victims.

^c A large reservoir (see 2 Sam. ii. 13), of which there are still traces at El Jib (Gibeon), which is about two miles north of Mizpah. Josh. xviii. 25.)

^d i. e. turned round.

slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, even the men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, 17 whom he had brought again from Gibeon : and they departed, and dwelt in ¹Geruth Chimham ^a, which is ¹ Or, *the lodging place of Chimham*† 18 by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt, because of the Chaldeans ^b: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor over the land.

Johanan and his followers ask Jeremiah for a declaration of God's will. xlii. 1-6.

- 42 Then all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and ²Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, ² In ch. xliii. 2, Azariah.† and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, 2 came near, and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let, we pray thee, our supplication ³be accepted before thee, ³ Heb. *fall*. and pray for us unto the LORD thy God, even for all this remnant ; for we are left but a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us :
- 3 That the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we should walk, and the thing that we should do.
- 4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard you ; behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words ; and it shall come to pass that whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare it unto you ; I will keep nothing back
- 5 from you. Then they said to Jeremiah, The LORD be a true and faithful witness ⁴amongst us, if we do not ⁴ Or, *against* even according to all the word wherewith the LORD
- 6 thy God shall send thee to us. Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee ; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.

They refuse to obey God's command that they should remain in Judah. xlii. 7-22.

- 7 And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of 8 the LORD came unto Jeremiah. Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which were with him, and all the people

^a Probably the caravanserai of Chimham, the son of Barzillai (2 Sam. xix. 38, 40), either built by him or for some other reason named after him. If so, it may very possibly have been the 'inn' where Christ was born. But see Driver.

^b i.e. they were afraid of the vengeance of the Chaldeans, who might not trouble to find out who was really responsible for the crimes.

from the least even to the greatest, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to ¹present your supplication before him: If ye will still abide in this land, then will I ¹⁰build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. Be not afraid of the ¹¹king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid ^a; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. And I ¹²will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land. But ¹³if ye say, We will not dwell in this land; so that ye obey not the voice of the LORD your God: saying, ¹⁴No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell: now therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, ¹⁵O remnant of Judah: thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, If ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there; then it shall ¹⁶come to pass, that the sword, which ye fear, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye are afraid, ²shall follow hard after you ¹⁷there in Egypt; and there ye shall die. So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: and none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, ¹⁸the God of Israel; As mine anger and my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more. The ¹⁹LORD hath spoken concerning you, O remnant of Judah, Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have testified unto you this day. For ye have dealt deceit- ²⁰fully ³against your own souls ^b; for ye sent me unto

¹ Heb. *shall cleave after you.*

² Or, *in your souls.*

^a See note on xli. 18.

^b Ye have erred at the risk of your own lives. Keil. The words do not necessarily imply, as the margin and A. V. suggest, that when they came to Jeremiah they had definitely determined only to follow his advice if it agreed with their own wishes. It is disobedience rather than deceit that Jeremiah complains of. Probably they were taken aback by what seemed such a dangerous

the LORD your God, saying, Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it: 21 and I have this day declared it to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God in any 22 thing for the which he hath sent me unto you. Now therefore know certainly that ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go to sojourn there.

They proceed to Egypt, taking Jeremiah, Baruch, and many others with them. xliii. 1-7.

43 And it came to pass that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, wherewith the LORD their 2 God had sent him to them, even all these words, then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Ye shall not go into Egypt 3 to sojourn there: but Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death, and 4 carry us away captives to Babylon^a. So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to 5 dwell in the land of Judah. But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all the nations whither they had been driven to sojourn in 6 the land of Judah; the men, and the women, and the children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of 7 Neriah; and they came into the land of Egypt; for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: and they came even to Tahpanhes^b.

policy. This complaint anticipating, as it appears, their rejection of Jeremiah's counsel, shews that probably two or more sections (of the biography) have been combined in this chapter.

^a Here there is a revival of the old suspicion of treachery.

^b See note on ii. 16. Being on the frontier they naturally came here first.

Jeremiah foretells the fall of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar.
xliii. 8-13.

Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in 8
Tahpanhes, saying, Take great stones in thine hand, 9
and ^{†1}hide them in mortar in the brickwork ^a, which is
at the entry of Pharaoh's ^b house in Tahpanhes, in the
sight of the men of Judah; and say unto them, 10
Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:

†¹ Or, lay
them with
mortar in
the pave-
ment (or
square)

Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the
king of Babylon, my servant,
And will set his throne upon these stones that I
have hid;

†² Or,
glittering

And he shall spread his ² royal pavilion ^c over them.
And he shall come, and shall smite the land of 11
Egypt;

Such as are for death *shall be given* to death,

And such as are for captivity to captivity,

And such as are for the sword to the sword ^d.

And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods 12
of Egypt ^e;

And he shall burn them, and carry them away
captive ^f:

†³ Or,
obelisks

And he shall array himself with the land of Egypt,

†⁴ Or, The
house of
the sun
Probably,
Heliopolis
or On.

As a shepherd putteth on his garment ^g;

And he shall go forth from thence in peace ^h.

He shall also break the ^a pillars of ⁴ Beth-shemesh ⁱ, 13
that is in the land of Egypt;

^a The general meaning of the symbolism is tolerably clear. The stones were to be laid in mortar as a suitable foundation for the throne which Nebuchadrezzar is to set up as a sign of conquest at the entry of Pharaoh's house. But the meaning of the word translated brickwork is far from certain. Probably it means the tile or stone pavement. Great stones would be required, because the throne would be very great.

^b i.e. Apries, the Pharaoh Hophra of the Bible see xliv. 30, the successor of Psammetichus II, who himself succeeded Pharaoh-Neco who had defeated Josiah at Megiddo, and was afterwards defeated by Nebuchadrezzar at Carchemish. For his palace at Memphis see note on xlv. 19.

^c 'His rich and beautiful tapestry' on which the throne rested.

^d Cf. xv. 2.

^e According to one of the papyri of Elephantine, Cambyses destroyed all the temples of the gods of Egypt and left the temple of Yahu (Jehovah) alone uninjured. See note on xlv. 15.

^f He would burn the temples and carry off the idols.

^g A metaphor to express the ease with which he would carry off the booty. (Ewald.)

^h There would be no one to disturb or hinder him.

This part of the prophecy was not literally fulfilled. One of the obelisks, of which there were a large number at On (see marg.), was brought by Augustus to Rome in 19 B.C., and still stands in the Piazza del Popolo; another, 'Cleopatra's

And the houses of the gods of Egypt shall he burn with fire.

The Jews, now settled in Egypt^a, are rebuked for their idolatry. xliv. 1-10.

- 44 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwelt in the land of Egypt, which dwelt at Migdol^b, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein; because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, nor ye, nor your fathers. Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as it is this day. Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Wherefore commit ye *this* great evil against your own souls, to cut off from you man and woman, infant and suckling, out of the midst of Judah, so to leave you none remaining; in that ye provoke me unto anger with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to sojourn; that ye may be cut off, and that ye may be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of

needle,' stands on the Thames embankment; a third, erected by Thothmes III (16th cent. B. C.) to celebrate his victory over the confederated Syrian princes at Megiddo, is in Constantinople; and a fourth in Paris; while one of the smaller and most ancient remains *in situ* and is in a remarkably good state of preservation. But, in fact, there is no historical record of any invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar, and its conquest was really effected by the Persian Cambyses.

^a A considerable period, perhaps of some years, seems to have elapsed since the events of the two preceding chapters.

^b Migdol (probably a place 12 miles south of Pelusium), Tahpanhes (see note on ii. 16), and Noph (Memphis, the ancient capital, see note on xlv. 19), were in Lower Egypt. Pathros is Upper Egypt (see Ezek. xxix. 14).

Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? They are not humbled even ¹⁰ unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.

Except for a few fugitives, they would all perish there. xliv. 11-14.

Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God ¹¹ of Israel: Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, even to cut off all Judah. And I will take the ¹² remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed; in the land of Egypt shall they fall: they shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. For I will punish them that ¹³ dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: so that none of the remnant of Judah, ¹⁴ which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they ¹ have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return save such as shall escape.

Heb. *lift up their soul.*

At a great assembly at Pathros the women attempt to justify their conduct. xliv. 15-19.

Then all the men which knew that their wives ¹⁵ burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great assembly, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros^a, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast ¹⁶ spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly perform ¹⁷ every word that is gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour

^a The Aramaic papyri of Elephantine, recently discovered, seem to shew that the whole Jewish colony did not worship other gods, but that some of them founded a temple at that spot to their God Yahu. At any rate, it was already in existence before the conquest, by Cambyzes, in 525 B.C. See note on Isa. xix. 18, and art. by Driver in *Guardian*, Nov. 6, 1907, p. 1827.

out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of ¹ victuals, and were well, and ¹ Heb. bread.
 18 saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.

19 And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to ² worship her ^a, and pour out ² Or, pour-tray [†] drink offerings unto her, without our husbands ^b?

Jeremiah, denying their premises, declares that idolatry is the cause of their present distress. xlv. 20-23.

20 Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, even to all the people which
 21 had given him that answer, saying, The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD
 22 remember them, and came it not into his mind? so that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land become a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse,
 23 without inhabitant, as it is this day. Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as it is this day.

He solemnly repeats the prediction of their punishment. xlv. 24-28.

24 Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women,

^a Lit. 'cakes to pourtray her'. The word for cakes is Babylonian (Driver). In the north of England there is still an old custom of making dough cakes representing a woman and child. This is, no doubt, a medieval survival derived, it may be, originally from pagan sources. See *Encyc. Bibl.*, 460, 3992, and note on vii. 18.

^b Though there were several men among them (ver. 15), the women were the actual offenders, and they were the chief speakers. Keil refers to Num. xxx. 8, according to which a woman's vows were not valid unless approved by her husband. Though this law was later, the principle which it embodied may have been ancient.

Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt :

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ²⁵ saying: Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and with your hands have fulfilled it, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: establish then your vows, and perform your vows^a. Therefore hear ²⁶ ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt: Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, As the Lord GOD liveth.

Behold, I watch ^b over them for evil, and not for ²⁷ good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. And they ²⁸ that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose word shall stand, mine, or theirs.

The approaching fall of Pharaoh Hophra is a sign that Jeremiah's words will be fulfilled. xlv. 29-30.

And this shall be the sign unto you, saith the LORD, ²⁹ that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil: thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will give Pharaoh ³⁰ Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life^c.

^a Ironical: do then what you have determined to do. Cf. Amos iv. 4-5.

^b Cf. i. 12; xxxi. 28.

^c Apries—see note on xliii. 9), in fact, became the victim of a revolt and was finally strangled.

(6) *A PERSONAL PROPHECY^a TO BARUCH, CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THE EVENTS OF CHAP. XXXVI.* xlv.

Baruch's discontent and complaint. xlv. 1-3.

45 The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he wrote^b these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel,¹ unto thee,¹ Or, *con-*
O Baruch : *cerning* †

3 Thou didst say, Woe is me now !
For the LORD hath added sorrow to my pain ;
² I am weary with my groaning,
And I find no rest^c. ² See
Ps. vi. 6. †

Words of reproof mingled with comfort. xlv. 4-5.

4 Thus shalt thou say unto him,
Thus saith the LORD :
Behold, that which I have built will I break
down,
And that which I have planted I will pluck up ;
And this in the whole land^d.
5 And seekest thou great things for thyself ?
Seek them not :
For, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh,
Saith the LORD :
But thy life will I give unto thee for a prey^e
In all places whither thou goest.

^a This prophecy refers to a period eighteen years before the fall of Jerusalem. See xxxvi. 4. For a probable explanation of its present position, see Introduction, p. 44.

^b Better 'while he was writing'. It is very unlikely that he had finished in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Cf. xxxvi. 9.

^c Baruch is very depressed at all the calamities which Jeremiah foretold.

^d God's threatenings concerned the whole land. Baruch, a single individual, could not expect them to be put off because interfering with his own hopes and ambitions.

^e Baruch must be content with the promise that his life, at any rate, would be preserved. See note on xxi. 9. Legends exist which represent him as so vexed with not being invested with prophetic powers, as Elisha was when he succeeded Elijah, that he became an apostate, and under the name of Zoroaster introduced the Persian religion which is called after this name.

Book II.

ORACLES OF DOOM FOR THE NATIONS. xlvii—li.

I. EGYPT. xlvii.

(1) *AN ODE OF TRIUMPH UPON THE HUMILIATING DEFEAT OF PHARAOH-NECO AT CARCHEMISH* (605 B.C.)^a. xlvii. 1-12.*Introductory.* xlvii. 1-2.The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the **46** prophet concerning the nations.

Of Egypt: concerning the army of Pharaoh-neco 2
king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in
Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon
smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of
Josiah, king of Judah.

The Egyptians are bidden to advance. xlvii. 3-4.

Order ye the buckler and shield,	3
And draw near to battle.	
Harness the horses,	4
And get up, ye horsemen,	
And stand forth with your helmets;	
Furbish the spears,	
Put on the coats of mail.	

Their sudden repulse and flight. xlvii. 5-6.

Wherefore have I seen it?	5
They are dismayed and are turned backward;	
And their mighty ones are beaten down,	
And are fled apace, and look not back:	
Terror is on every side ^b , saith the LORD.	
Let not the swift flee away,	6
Nor the mighty man escape;	
In the north by the river Euphrates	
Have they stumbled and fallen.	

The proud advance of the Egyptian army with her allies. xlvii. 7-9.

¹ Who is this that riseth up like the Nile,	7
Whose waters toss themselves like the rivers?	
Egypt riseth up like the Nile,	8
And his waters toss themselves like the rivers ^c :	

^a Or, *Who is this like the Nile that riseth up, like the rivers whose waters toss themselves?* Egypt is like the Nile that riseth up &c.

^a See note on xxv. 1, and pp. 25 and 40. Cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 20-24.^b The prophet's old cry, Magor-missabib. See note on vi. 25.^c The branches of the Nile in Lower Egypt.

And he saith, I will rise up,
 I will cover the earth ;
 I will destroy the city and the inhabitants
 thereof.

- 9 Go up, ye horses ^a ;
 And rage, ye chariots ;
 And let the mighty men go forth :
 Cush and Put, that handle the shield ;
 And the Ludim, that handle and bend the bow.

*In the terrible day of Jehovah, Egypt would find no
 healing for her wound. xlvi. 10-12.*

- 10 For that day is *a day* of the Lord, the LORD of
 hosts,
 A day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of
 his adversaries :
 And the sword shall devour and be satiate,
 And shall drink its fill of their blood :
 For the Lord, the LORD of hosts, hath a sacrifice in
 the north country
 By the river Euphrates.

- 11 Go up into Gilead, and take balm ^b, O virgin
 daughter of Egypt :
 In vain dost thou use many medicines ;
 There is no healing for thee ^c.

- 12 The nations have heard of thy shame,
 And the earth is full of thy cry :
 For the mighty man hath stumbled against the
 mighty,
 They are fallen both of them together ^d.

(2) *A PREDICTION OF NEBUCHADREZZAR'S suc-
 CESSFUL INVASION OF EGYPT* ^e. xlvi. 13-26.

The Egyptian collapse is foretold. xlvi. 13-19.

- 13 The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the
 prophet, how that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon
 should come and smite the land of Egypt.

- 14 Declare ye in Egypt,
 And publish in Migdol,

^a The prophet again urges the Egyptians and their allies to their destruction. The allies are Ethiopia, Libya, and perhaps an African race of Lydians. Cf. Gen. x. 6, 7, 13; Ezek. xxx. 5.

^b See note on viii. 22.

^c Cf. xxx. 13.

^d Her mighty warriors are of no use to her : they only jostle together and fall.

^e This prophecy is connected by subject-matter and date with xliii. 8-13. See note on xliii. 13.

And publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes ^a :

Say ye, Stand forth, and prepare thee ;

For the sword hath devoured round about thee.

† ¹ Or, according to some ancient authorities, *Wily is thy strong one swept away? he stood not &c.*
² Or, thrust them down

¹ Why are thy strong ones ^b swept away?

15

They stood not, because the LORD did ² drive them.

He made many to stumble,

16

Yea, they fell one upon another :

And they said ^c, Arise, and let us go again to our own people,

And to the land of our nativity,

From the oppressing sword.

They ^d cried there, Pharaoh king of Egypt is but ^e a noise :

He hath let the appointed time ^f pass by.

As I live, saith the King, whose name is the LORD ¹⁸ of hosts,

Surely like Tabor among the mountains,

And like Carmel by the sea ^g,

So shall he come.

² Or, *O thou that dwellest with the daughter of Egypt*
 † ¹ Heb. *Make thee vessels of captivity.*

³ O thou daughter ^h that dwellest in Egypt,

19

⁴ Furnish thyself to go into captivity :

For Noph shall become a desolation,

And shall be burnt up,

Without inhabitant ⁱ.

^a In the capital (Noph or Memphis), and the two northern frontier towns (Migdol and Tahpanhes), the inhabitants are called upon to make preparations to resist the invader, who has already been devastating neighbouring countries.

^b The word 'strong' is an epithet often applied to bulls, as in Ps. xxii. 12 ; 1. 13 (though Jeremiah elsewhere always applies it to steeds. See viii. 16 ; xlvii. 3 ; l. 11) ; and most probably the LXX (a translation made in Egypt) is right in seeing here an allusion to the sacred bull Apis, the symbol of Osiris. Three years after the battle of Carchemish an Apis died and was buried by Neco with unparalleled magnificence (Rawlinson, *Anc. Hist. from the Mon.*, Egypt, p. 180). Jeremiah conceives the sacred bull as so little able to help the Egyptians that he is swept off by the enemy. For similar thoughts, cf. Hos. x. 6 ; Isa. xlvi. 1.

^c The speakers are strangers, especially mercenaries (cf. ver. 21 ; but see Driver).
^d i.e. the strangers ; but perhaps we should translate with LXX, 'Call ye the name of Pharaoh', &c.

^e i.e. ruin.

^f i.e. when he might have saved himself and them.

^g Nebuchadrezzar is compared in his power and majesty to lofty mountains.

^h i.e. inhabitants. The figure is usually applied to a town.

ⁱ See note on ii. 16. The modern village of Mitrabineh, with a very beautiful palm-grove, marks the site of ancient Memphis. Hophra's magnificent palace, 400 feet long by 200 feet, with its great gateway, its immense court, stone-lined halls, and walls 40 feet high and 15 feet thick, has just been discovered (1908). The Temple of Ptah, of which considerable ruins still remain, was the largest in Egypt ; while close by are the Sakkara Pyramids, which are the most ancient, and the stupendous Apis mausoleum, and above it the famous Serapeum mentioned by Strabo.

Terrible as the overthrow would be, it would not be final.

xlvi. 20-26.

- 20 Egypt is a very fair heifer ^a;
But ¹destruction out of the north is come, ²it is ¹Or, *the*
 come. *gadfly* †
- 21 Also her hired men in the midst of her are like ²Or, ac-
 calves of the stall ^b;
 For they also are turned back, *cording to*
 They are fled away together, *many*
 They did not stand: *ancient*
 For the day of their calamity is come upon them, *authorities,*
 The time of their visitation. *upon her* †
- 22 ³The sound thereof shall go like the serpent ^c; ³Or, *Her*
 For they shall march with an army, *sound is*
 And come against her with axes, *like that of*
 As hewers of wood. *the serpent*
as it goeth †
- 23 They shall cut down her forest ^d,
 Saith the LORD,
⁴Though it cannot be searched; ⁴Or, *For*
 Because they are more than the locusts,
 And are innumerable.
- 24 The daughter of Egypt shall be put to shame;
 She shall be delivered into the hand of the people
 of the north.
- 25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith:
 Behold, I will punish Amon of No ^e,
 And Pharaoh, and Egypt,
 With her gods, and her kings;
 Even Pharaoh, and them that trust in him:
- 26 And I will deliver them into the hand of those that
 seek their lives,
 And into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of
 Babylon,
 And into the hand of his servants:
 And afterwards it shall be inhabited,
 As in the days of old,
 Saith the LORD.

* * * *

^a Possibly in allusion to her spouse, the bull Apis.

^b The mercenaries who had been very well cared for, like fatted calves, desert her in the time of danger.

^c Egypt is like a snake pursued by woodcutters, which cannot even utter an audible cry, only a mere rustle, as it glides away from its pursuers.

^d The woodcutters suggest a change of metaphor. Egypt is now compared to a huge forest with countless trees. Cf. xxi. 14.

^e See note on Nahum iii. 8.

WORDS OF HOPE FOR ISRAEL^a. xlvi. 27-28.

+¹ See ch.
xxx. 10, 11.

¹ But fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, 27
Neither be dismayed, O Israel :
For, lo, I will save thee from afar,
And thy seed from the land of their captivity ;
And Jacob shall return,
And shall be quiet and at ease,

And none shall make him afraid.

Fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD ; 28

For I am with thee :

For I will make a full end of all the nations whither
I have driven thee,

But I will not make a full end of thee ;

But I will correct thee with judgement,
And will in no wise ² leave thee unpunished.

² Or, *hold
thee guilt-
less*

* * * *

II. PHILISTIA. xlvii.

The wasting of the land by the Chaldeans. xlvii. 1-5.

The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the 47
prophet concerning the Philistines, before that Pharaoh
smote Gaza^b.

Thus saith the LORD :

2

Behold, waters rise up out of the north,
And shall become an overflowing stream,
And shall overflow the land and all that is therein^c,

The city and them that dwell therein :

And the men shall cry,

And all the inhabitants of the land shall howl.

At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his 3
strong ones,

At the rushing of his chariots,

At the rumbling of his wheels,

The fathers look not back to their children for feeble-
ness of hands ;

Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the 4
Philistines,

^a These verses, which here have no obvious connexion with the context, are a slightly different recension of xxx. 10-11, where they are much more suitable, but have been somewhat abridged by the omission of the first clause of xlvi. 28.

^b This heading suggests that the compiler of this collection, or of the book, understood the prediction to have been fulfilled in the taking of Gaza by Pharaoh-Neco on his return after his defeat at the battle of Carchemish (so a doubtful passage in Herodotus, ii. 159, has been explained), but it was evidently a far more crushing overthrow by the Chaldeans that Jeremiah here anticipates.

^c Cf. Isa. viii. 7-8.

To cut off from Tyre and Zidon every helper that remaineth ^a:

For the LORD will spoil the Philistines,

The remnant of the ¹isle of Capthor ^b. ¹ Or, sea coast

- 5 Baldness is come upon Gaza ;
Ashkelon is brought to nought,
The remnant of their valley ^c :
How long wilt thou cut thyself ^d ?

The sword is the instrument of Jehovah's vengeance.

xlvi. 6-7.

- 6 O thou sword of the LORD ^e,
How long will it be ere thou be quiet ?
Put up thyself into thy scabbard ;
Rest, and be still.
- 7 How canst thou be quiet,
Seeing the LORD hath given ² thee a charge ? ² Heb. *it*. †
Against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore,
There hath he appointed it.

III. MOAB ^f. xlviii.

The desolation of the land and the flight of its inhabitants. xlviii. 1-10.

48 Of Moab ^f.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel :
Woe unto Nebo ^g ! for it is laid waste ;
Kiriathaim ^h is put to shame, it is taken :

^a The subjugation of Philistia would indirectly involve Phœnicia, for it would cut off her one remaining ally.

^b Usually identified with Crete, in any case the original home of the Philistines, here put for the Philistines themselves, the last remnant of whom would be spoiled. See notes on Amos ix. 7 ; Zeph. ii. 5.

^c i.e. the whole Philistine plain.

^d Baldness and cutting are both signs of mourning, the consequences of the Philistine overthrow. Cf. xlviii. 37.

^e Highly poetical. The prophet first intreats the sword to desist from its terrible work and then remembers that it is executing God's charge.

^f This prophecy is to a large extent composed by the piecing together of fragments from older prophecies against Moab. Cf. Num. xxi. 28-29 ; xxiv. 17 ; Isa. xv-xvi ; xxiv. 17-18 ; Amos ii. 2 ; Zeph. ii. 8-10. Unless we are to suppose that xlviii. 43-44 ^a (where see note) are, as many think, an interpolation, or else have been copied in Isa. xxiv from this chapter, this prophecy must be regarded as a very late compilation long after the time of Jeremiah. In any case the combination shews great skill and prophetic power.

^g From 2 Kings xxiv. 2 we learn that Moab had joined the Chaldeans against Judah. See note on xxxv. 11.

^h Nebo and Kiriathaim both seem to have been situated on the eastern border of Moab, suggesting an invasion from the east.

¹ Or, *The high fort*
[†] ² Or, *dis-mayed*

¹ Misgab is put to shame and ² broken down.
 The praise ^a of Moab is no more ; 2
 In Heshbon they have devised ^b evil against her,
 Come, and let us cut her off from being a nation.
 Thou also, O Madmen, shalt be brought to silence ^b ;
 The sword shall pursue thee.

The sound of a cry from Horonaim, 3
 Spoiling and great destruction !
 Moab is destroyed ; 4
 Her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

[†] ³ See
 Is. xv. 5.

³ For by the ascent of Luhith with continual weeping 5
 shall they go up ;
 For in the going down of Horonaim they have heard
 the distress ^c of the cry of destruction.

[†] ³ See
 ch. xvii. 6.

Flee, save your lives, 6
 And be like ⁴ the heath in the wilderness ^d.
 For, because thou hast trusted in thy works ^e and 7
 in thy treasures,

Thou also shalt be taken :
 And Chemosh ^f shall go forth into captivity,
 His priests and his princes together.

[†] ⁵ See
 Josh. xiii. 9,
 17, 21.

And the spoiler shall come upon every city, 8
 And no city shall escape ;
 The valley ^g also shall perish,
 And ⁵ the plain ^h shall be destroyed ;
 As the LORD hath spoken.

⁶ Or, *For she must fly: and her cities*
 &c.

Give wings unto Moab, 9
⁶ That she may fly and get her away :
 And her cities shall become a desolation,
 Without any to dwell therein.

^a i.e. her fame.

^b In the words 'devised' and 'brought to silence' there are plays on the words Heshbon and Madmen. See notes on Micah i. 10-16.

^c This word is probably a corrupt but accidental interpolation. Cf. Isa. xv. 5.

^d The desolation of the habitat of the bush is transferred in thought to the bush itself with its stunted growth. See note on xvii. 6.

^e i.e. probably fortifications. Many of these were constructed or reconstructed by Mesha in the time of Ahab, as testified by the Moabite stone.

^f The national god of the Moabites. The name occurs no less than twelve times on the Moabite stone. Cf. xlvii. 15, where see note; and Isa. xlvii. 1; Num. xxi. 29.

^g i.e. the wide valley of the Jordan.

^h See marginal references. The allusion is to the table-land of Moab. The land had been taken by the Ammonites and Israelites and retaken by the Moabites. Upon it were Heshbon, Rabbath-Ammon, and several other cities, some of which are mentioned in this chapter.

- 10 Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD ^a
¹ negligently,
 And cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from
 blood.

Moab's former security is now over. xlviii. 11-16.

- 11 Moab hath been at ease from his youth,
 And he hath settled on his lees ^b,
 And hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel,
 Neither hath he gone into captivity :
 Therefore his taste remaineth in him,
 And his scent is not changed.
- 12 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD,
 That I will send unto him them that ² pour off,
 And they shall ² pour him off ;
 And they shall empty his vessels,
 And break their ³ bottles in pieces.
- 13 And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh,
 As the house of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el
 their confidence ^c.
- 14 How say ye, We are mighty men,
 And valiant men for the war ^d ?
- 15 Moab is laid waste,
 And ⁴ they are gone up into her cities,
 And his chosen young men are gone down to
 the slaughter,
 Saith the King, whose name is the LORD of
 hosts.
- 16 The calamity of Moab is near to come,
 And his affliction hasteth fast.

*The neighbouring peoples are invited to lament over
 Moab's doom.* xlviii. 17-19.

- 17 All ye that are round about him, bemoan him,
 And all ye that know his name ;
 Say, How is the strong ⁵ staff ^e broken,
 The beautiful rod !

^a i. e. Jehovah's vengeance on Moab.

^b Wine if allowed to settle and rest upon its sediment improves, but if disturbed deteriorates. So Moab, unmolested by other nations, had developed a proud spirit of narrow patriotism. Cf. Isa. xxv. 6 ; Zeph. i. 12.

^c A reference to the captivity of the Northern Kingdom and to the indignity to the Golden Calf, on whose help Israel had relied. Cf. 1 Kings xii. 28-29 ; Hos. x. 6.

^d How vain now their proud boasting !

^e Of power and dominion, as in Isa. ix. 4.

¹ Or,
deceitfully

² Heb. *tilt*
 (a vessel). †

³ Or, *jars*

⁴ Or, *her*
cities are
gone up in
smoke

⁵ Or, *sceptre*

¹ Or, *art
scated*

^a O thou daughter that ¹ dwellest in Dibon ^b, . . . 18
Come down from thy glory,
And sit in thirst ^c ;
For the spoiler of Moab is come up against thee,
He hath destroyed thy strong holds.

² Heb. *in-
habittress*

O ² inhabitant of Aroer ^d, 19
Stand by the way, and espy :
Ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth ;
Say, What hath been done ?

The whole country is crushed and helpless ^e.
xlvi. 20-25.

[†] Or,
dismayed

Moab is put to shame ; 20
For it is ³ broken down :
Howl and cry ;
Tell ye it in Arnon,
That Moab is laid waste.

[†] See
ver. 8.

And judgement is come upon ⁴ the plain ^f country ; ²¹
Upon Holon, and upon Jahzah, and upon Me-
phaath ;
And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon ²²
Beth-diblathaim ;
And upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, ²³
and upon Beth-meon ;
And upon Keriath, and upon Bozrah ^g, 24
And upon all the cities of the land of Moab,
Far or near.

The horn ^h of Moab is cut off, 25
And his arm ^h is broken,
Saith the LORD.

^a R.V., following A.V., has transposed the first two lines at the beginning of verses 18 and 19 and thus injured the poetical movement.

^b See note on Isa. xv. 2.

^c A double thought, humiliation and drought ; but the expression is a very strange one and perhaps 'thirst' is a textual corruption of 'dust'. Cf. Isa. xlvii. 1.

^d The inhabitants of Aroer, a town on the river Arnon, are invited by the prophet to stand by the side of the track and ask the Moabite fugitives from the north of the country (whence the enemy would come) what had happened.

^e Verses 20-25 seem intended primarily as the answer to the people of Aroer in ver. 19, viz., that all the cities north of the Arnon have been destroyed ; but the language is extended, especially in verses 24 and 25, to include the whole country, making it a direct prophecy of Moab's fate.

^f Table-land. See note on ver. 8.

^g The identification of this city is very uncertain. It is, of course, quite a distinct town from the well-known Bozrah of Edom. See xlix. 13.

^h 'Horn' and 'arm' are emblems of strength.

Moab's fate is a punishment for his proud attitude towards Jehovah and Israel. xlviii. 26-28.

- 26 Make ye him drunken ^a ;
 For he magnified himself against the LORD :
 And Moab shall wallow in his vomit,
 And he also shall be in derision.
- 27 For was not Israel a derision unto thee ?
 Was he found among thieves ^b ?
 For as often as thou speakest of him,
 Thou waggest the head.
- 28 O ye inhabitants of Moab, leave the cities,
 And dwell in the rock ;
 And be like the dove that maketh her nest in the
 sides of the hole's mouth ^c.

Pride is punished by the ruin of vineyards and harvests.
 xlviii. 29-30.

- 29 ¹ We have heard of the pride of Moab ^d,
That he is very proud ;
 His loftiness, and his pride, and his arrogancy,
 And the haughtiness of his heart.
- 30 I know his wrath, saith the LORD, that it is
 nought ;
 His boastings have wrought nothing.

¹ See
 Isa. xvi. 6. †

The universal mourning, in which the prophet joins.
 xlviii. 31-39.

- 31 ² Therefore will I ^e howl for Moab ;
 Yea, I will cry out for all Moab :
 For the men ^f of Kir-heres shall they mourn.
- 32 With more than ^g the weeping of Jazer will I weep
 for thee,

² See Isa.
 xv. 5, xvi. 7,
 11. †

³ O vine of Sibmah :
 Thy branches passed over the sea ^h,

³ See Isa.
 xvi. 8, 9. †

^a i. e. reel and fall. Cf. xxv. 15-16, &c.

^b Had he been a thief such conduct might have been justifiable.

^c Probably an allusion to the ash-rumped rock-dove (*Columba Schimperi*), which abounds in Palestine and nests in the clefts of the rocks.

^d Verses 29-38 are an adaption of Isa. xvi. 6-11 and Isa. xv. 2-6 a (where see notes), with a few inversions and paraphrases, but very many of the differences are merely textual varieties. The text of this passage is less pure than that of Isaiah.

^e i. e. the prophet ; but cf. Isa. xvi. 7.

^f Probably a corruption of ' raisin cakes ', as in Isa. xvi. 7.

^g Probably we should read ' With the weeping ', as in Isa. xvi. 9.

^h The Dead Sea. The extent of the vine culture is expressed under the figure of a huge trailing vine.

They reached even to the sea of Jazer^a :
Upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage
The spoiler^b is fallen.

† See
Is. xvi. 10.

¹ And gladness and joy is taken away, 33
From the fruitful field and from the land of Moab ;
And I have caused wine to cease from the wine-
presses :

None shall tread with shouting ;
The shouting shall be no shouting^c.

† See Is.
xv. 4, &c.

² From the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh^d, 34
Even unto Jahaz have they uttered their voice,

³ Or, as
an heifer of
three years
old

From Zoar even unto Horonaim, ³ to Eglath-
shelishiyah^e :

⁴ Heb.
desolations.

For the waters of Nimrim also shall become ⁴ deso-
late.

Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, 35
Saith the LORD,

Him that offereth in the high place,
And him that burneth incense to his gods.

Therefore mine heart soundeth for Moab like pipes, 36
And mine heart soundeth like pipes for the men of
Kir-heres :

Therefore the abundance that he hath gotten is
perished.

For every head is bald^f, 37
And every beard clipped :
Upon all the hands are cuttings,
And upon the loins sackcloth.

On all the housetops of Moab and in the streets 38
thereof

There is lamentation every where :

For I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is
no pleasure^g,

Saith the LORD.

Or,
Howl ye!

How is it broken down ! 39
⁵ How do they howl !

^a Jazer lies in an upland valley about 15 miles north of Heshbon. The word 'sea' may refer to some otherwise unknown inland lake no longer existing, but is more likely an accidental insertion from the previous line. Cf. Isa. xvi. 8.

^b Probably a textual corruption of 'shouting', as in Isa. xvi. 9. See next note.

^c The word 'shouting' was specially used of the shouting of the grape-treaders (see xxv. 30). It would be exchanged for the shout of war.

^d Perhaps we should read 'They have cried from Heshbon even unto Elealeh'.

^e The third Eglath. See note on Isa. xv. 5.

^f These are all signs of grief. See notes on xvi. 6 and xlviii. 5.

^g Cf. xxii. 28.

How hath Moab turned the back with shame !
 So shall Moab become a derision and a dismaying
 To all that are round about him.

*Moab's doom, terrible as it will be, is not absolutely
 final.* xlviii. 40-47.

40 For thus saith the LORD :

Behold ^a, he shall fly as an eagle,

And shall spread out his wings against Moab.

41 ¹ Kerioth ^b is taken,

And the strong holds are surprised,

And the heart of the mighty men of Moab at that
 day shall be

As the heart of a woman in her pangs.

42 And Moab shall be destroyed from being a people,
 Because he ^c hath magnified himself against the
 LORD.

43 ² Fear, and the pit, and the snare ^d, are upon thee, ² See Is.
 O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD. xxiv. 17,
 18. †

44 He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit ;
 And he that getteth up out of the pit shall be
 taken in the snare :

For I will bring upon her ^e, even upon Moab,

The year of their ^e visitation,

Saith the LORD.

45 ³ They that fled stand without strength
 Under the shadow of Heshbon ^e :

⁴ For a fire is gone forth out of Heshbon,

And a flame from the midst of Sihon,

And hath devoured the corner of Moab,

And the crown of the head ^f of the tumultuous
 ones ^g.

¹ Or, *The
 cities are
 taken*

³ Or, *Flee-
 ing because
 of the force
 they stand
 under*

⁴ Or, *But*
 See Num.
 xxi. 28, 29. †

^a The greater part of verses 40-41 is repeated in the prophecy against Edom, xlix. 22.

^b See Amos ii. 2.

^c Notice the characteristic change of pronoun, 'he', 'her', 'their'. These are all used of Moab in verses 42 and 44, while in verse 43 the inhabitant of Moab is addressed in the 2nd person.

^d With reference to the assonance of these words see General Introduction, vol. i, p. xxii, and note on the parallel Isa. xxiv. 17-18, from which this passage appears to be derived. If this be so, as Isa. xxiv is probably much later than Jeremiah, this prophecy against Moab must have been either written or, more probably, revised and enlarged at a much later date. See note at the beginning of this chapter.

^e The fugitives seek refuge in Heshbon, perhaps as being at this time an Ammonite town. See xlix. 3.

^f See note on ii. 16.

^g This description of the Moabites (lit. 'the sons of tumult') is substituted for 'lords of the high places' in Num. xxi. 28, to signify the roar with which they engage in battle.

Woe unto thee, O Moab !

46

The people of Chemosh is undone :
For thy sons are taken away captive,
And thy daughters into captivity.

¹ Or,
return to

Yet will I ¹ bring again the captivity of Moab in the 47
latter days,

Saith the LORD.

Thus far is the judgement of Moab.

IV. AMMON. xlix. 1-6.

A retribution for their capture of Gad. xlix. 1-2.

Of the children of Ammon.

49

Thus saith the LORD :

Hath Israel no sons ?

Hath he no heir ?

⁻ Or, *their
king*

Why then doth ² Malcam ^a possess Gad,
And his people dwell in the cities thereof ?

^c Or,
inherit

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, ²
That I will cause an alarm of war to be heard
against Rabbah ^b of the children of Ammon :

† ¹ See
ch. xxx. 18.

And it shall become a desolate ⁴ heap,
And her daughters shall be burned with fire :
Then shall Israel ^c possess them that did ^a possess him,
Saith the LORD.

*Their lamentation and terrible flight, but ultimate
restoration.* xlix. 3-6.

Howl, O Heshbon ^c,

3

For Ai ^d is spoiled ;

Cry, ye daughters of Rabbah,

Gird you with sackcloth :

Lament, and run to and fro among the fences ^e :

¹ Or,
*Wherefore
gloriest
thou in the
valleys ? thy
valley
floweth
away*

For ² Malcam shall go into captivity,

His priests and his princes together.

⁵ Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys ^f, ⁴
Thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter ^g ? that
trusted in her treasures,

^a i.e. Milcom, the god of the Ammonites. See 1 Kings xi. 5.

^b The capital of Ammon. See 2 Sam. xi. 1 ; xii. 26-31.

^c See note on xlviii. 45.

^d An unknown town of Ammon.

^e Probably 'sheep-folds' or 'vineyards'.

^f The fertile valley of Rabbah, flowing with abundance.

^g Cf. xxxi. 22. The application of this phrase to Ammon is curious and is perhaps to be explained of their traditional origin from Lot.

Saying, Who shall come unto me ^a?

- 5 Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee,
 Saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts,
 From all that are round about thee;
 And ye shall be driven out every man right forth,
 And there shall be none to gather up him that
 wandereth.

- 6 But afterward I will bring again the captivity of the
 children of Ammon,

Saith the LORD.

V. EDOM. xlix. 7-22.

*The wisdom of Edom will not be able to save him from
 his calamity. xlix. 7-11.*

- 7 Of Edom^b.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts :

Is wisdom no more in Teman ^c?
 Is counsel perished from the prudent?
 Is their wisdom vanished?

- 8 Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep ^d, O inhabitants of
 Dedan ^e;

For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him,
 The time that I shall visit him.

- 9 If grapegatherers came to thee,

¹ Would they not leave some gleaning grapes? ¹ Or, *They
 will leave
 no gleaning*

If thieves by night,

Would they not destroy till they had enough ^f? *grapes; if
 thieves by
 night, they
 will destroy
 till they
 have
 enough.*

- 10 But I have made Esau bare,

I have uncovered his secret places,
 And he shall not be able to hide himself :

His seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his
 neighbours, *For &c.
 See Obad.
 5.†*

And he is not.

11

Leave thy fatherless children,
 I will preserve them alive;
 And let thy widows trust in me ^g.

^a What enemy have I to fear?

^b In verses 7-16 are incorporated with some modification Obad. 1-6, but it is not improbable that Obadiah himself has incorporated an older prophecy.

^c See note on Amos i. 12. The question is ironical. Can it be that there are no wise counsels to save them in their distress?

^d i.e. remain in some secure hiding-place. Cf. ver. 30.

^e See note on Isa. xxi. 13. The friendly trading caravans are warned to turn back or hide lest they become involved in Edom's destruction.

^f See Obad. 5, where the enemy are *contrasted*, not as here, according to the best rendering (marg.), *compared* with grapegatherers and thieves.

^g The men must perish, but God has no quarrel with the innocent widows and children and will protect them.

He must drink Jehovah's cup at the hand of the nations. xlix. 12-15.

For thus saith the LORD :

12

Behold, they ¹to whom it pertained not to drink of the cup

Shall assuredly drink ;

And art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished ?

Thou shalt not go unpunished,

But thou shalt surely drink ^a.

For I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, 13

That Bozrah ^b shall become an astonishment,

A reproach, a waste, and a curse ;

And all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.

† ² See
Obad. 1-4.

² I have heard tidings from the LORD, 14

And an ambassador is sent among the nations,
Saying, Gather yourselves together, and come against her,

And rise up to the battle.

For, behold, I have made thee small among the ¹⁵nations,

And despised among men.

His rocky fortresses, of which he is so proud, will not avail to protect him from utter destruction. xlix. 16-19.

As for thy terribleness, the pride of thine heart ¹⁶hath deceived thee,

O thou that dwellest in the clefts of ³the rock ^c,

That holdest the height of the hill :

Though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle,

I will bring thee down from thence,

Saith the LORD.

And Edom shall become an astonishment : 17

Every one that passeth by it shall be astonished,

And shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah 18

And the neighbour cities ^d thereof,

Saith the LORD,

^a Cf. xxv. 15 ff. Edom deserved its fate far worse than other nations which had already been punished.

^b One of Edom's chief cities, here put for the country. Cf. Isa. lxviii. 1.

^c Sela ('a rock' = Petra), the capital of Edom, was shut in by mountains and formidable rocky precipices from the outer world. Hastings's *D.D.*, iv, p. 430.

^d Admah and Zeboim. See note on Hos. xi. 8.

No man shall dwell there,
Neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.

- 19 Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the
¹ pride of Jordan ^a ¹ Or, swelling
² Against the strong habitation : ² Or, Unto
³ But I will suddenly make him run away from her ^b ; ³ the per-
manent
 And whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her : ³ pastures
 For who is like me ? ³ Or, For I
 And who will appoint me a time ^c ? ³ will sud-
denly drive
 And who is the shepherd that will stand before ³ them
 me ^d ? ³ away †

*The final execution of Jehovah's purpose against
Edom. xlix. 20-22.*

- 20 Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD,
 That he hath taken against Edom ;
 And his purposes,
 That he hath purposed against the inhabitants of
 Teman :
 Surely ⁴ they shall drag them away, ⁴ Or, the
Even the little ones of the flock ^e ; ⁴ little ones of
 Surely he shall make their ⁵ habitation ⁶ desolate ⁴ the flock
 with them ^f. ⁵ shall drag
⁵ them away
 21 The earth trembleth at the noise of their fall ; ⁵ Or,
 There is a cry, the noise whereof is heard in the ⁶ pastures
 Red Sea. ⁶ Or,
⁶ astonished
⁶ at them
 22 Behold, he ^g shall come up and fly as the eagle,
 And spread out his wings against Bozrah :
 And the heart of the mighty men of Edom at that day
 shall be
 As the heart of a woman in her pangs.

^a See note on xii. 5. The enemy would come up as a lion against the strong places of Edom. Many early pilgrims speak of lions in the Jordan thicket. There are none there to-day, but many wild boars, leopards, hyenas, jackals, and wolves.

^b Rather, 'it'; i.e. the land, from which the *Edomites* are driven and a new ruler is appointed by God.

^c Summon me to meet him in a court of law or trial of strength. Cf. Job ix. 19. (Driver.)

^d The application of the metaphor is here changed. Jehovah himself is compared to the lion which no shepherd is able to withstand.

^e If the enemy are like a lion (ver. 19) the *Edomites* are like feeble lambs.

^f Or better, 'over them.'

^g The enemy, as in xlviii. 40-41, where nearly the same words are used with reference to Moab.

VI. DAMASCUS ^a. xlix. 23-27.*The panic and helpless slaughter of its inhabitants.*

Of Damascus,

23

Hamath is ashamed, and Arpad ^b;

For they have heard evil tidings,

They are melted away ^c;¹ Or, careThere is ¹ sorrow on the sea ;It cannot be quiet ^d.

Damascus is waxed feeble,

24

She turneth herself to flee,

And trembling hath seized on her :

Anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her,

As of a woman in travail.

How is the city of praise not forsaken,

25

The city of my joy ^e?Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, ²⁶And all the men of war shall be brought to silence
in that day,

Saith the LORD of hosts.

And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, ²⁷And it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad ^f.

VII. KEDAR AND HAZOR. xlix. 28-33.

The rude disturbance of their security. xlix. 28-31.Of Kedar ^g, and of the kingdoms of Hazor ^h, which 28
Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote ⁱ.

Thus saith the LORD :

Arise ye, go up to Kedar,

And spoil the children of the east ^k.

Their tents and their flocks shall they take ;

29

They shall carry away for themselves their curtains,

^a i. e. the kingdom, not the city merely, of Damascus, the Syria of the Books of Kings.^b A town which once had a petty king of its own, taken formerly by Assyria (Isa. xxxvi. 19), but now, it would seem, belonging to the kingdom of Damascus.^c They faint with anxiety at the news of an enemy approaching.^d There is probably a corruption of the text, which is not very easily corrected. We should perhaps read, 'They are in turmoil *like* the sea, which cannot rest.' Cf. Isa. lvii. 20.^e The beautiful situation of Damascus, as of 'a pearl set in emeralds', has long been remarked.^f Cf. Amos i. 4.^g An Arab race. See Gen. xxv. 13.^h i. e. the villages of the Arabs who had settled down, in contrast to the Bedawin or nomads. Cf. Isa. xlii. 11.ⁱ This fact is confirmed by a fragment of Berossus, but the date and circumstances are not known.^k A general name for trans-Jordanic peoples. Cf. Judg. vi. 3 ; vii. 12 ; viii. 10.

And all their vessels, and their camels :
And they shall cry unto them,
Terror on every side ^a.

- 30 Flee ye, wander far off,
Dwell deep ^b, O ye inhabitants of Hazor,
Saith the LORD ;
For Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken
counsel against you,
And hath conceived a purpose against you.
- 31 Arise, get you up ^c unto a nation that is at ease,
That dwelleth without care, saith the LORD ;
Which have neither gates nor bars,
Which dwell alone.

The destruction will be complete and final. xlix. 32-33.

- 32 And their camels shall be a booty,
And the multitude of their cattle a spoil :
And I will scatter unto all winds
Them that have the corners *of their hair* polled ^d ;
And I will bring their calamity from every side of
them,
Saith the LORD.
- 33 And Hazor shall be a dwelling place of jackals,
A desolation for ever ^e :
No man shall dwell there,
Neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.

VIII. ELAM ^f. xlix. 34-39

Scattered and consumed. xlix. 34-37.

- 34 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the
prophet concerning Elam in the beginning of the
reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying,
- 35 Thus saith the LORD of hosts :
Behold, I will break the bow of Elam,
The chief of their might.
- 36 And upon Elam will I bring the four winds
From the four quarters of heaven,

^a See note on vi. 25. Here it is the war-cry of the enemy.

^b See note on ver. 8. Here the warning is addressed to the inhabitants of the threatened towns themselves.

^c The prophet again summons the enemy to attack.

^d See note on ix. 26.

^e Cf. ix. 11. What were once settlements would become desolate ruins.

^f See note on Isa. xxii. 6. Elam, a people dwelling east of Chaldea, generally associated with it as a rival, an ally, or a subject people.

¹ Another reading is, *the everlasting outcasts.*

And will scatter them toward all those winds ;
And there shall be no nation whither ¹ the outcasts
of Elam shall not come.
And I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their 37
enemies,

And before them that seek their life :
And I will bring evil upon them,
Even my fierce anger,
Saith the LORD ;
And I will send the sword after them,
Till I have consumed them :

*Jehovah claims his sovereignty over them ; but will
restore them in the end. xlix. 38-39.*

And I will set my throne in Elam, 38
And will destroy from thence king and princes,
Saith the LORD.

But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that 39
I will bring again the captivity of Elam,
Saith the LORD.

IX. BABYLON. 1—li^a.

The Title. l. 1.

The word that the LORD spake concerning Babylon, **50**
concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah
the prophet.

*Babylon's impending overthrow by a nation from the
north. l. 2-3.*

Declare ye among the nations and publish, and set ²
up a standard ;

Publish, and conceal not :

Say, Babylon is taken,

Bel^b is put to shame,

Merodach^b is ² dismayed ;

Her images are put to shame,

Her idols are ² dismayed.

For out of the north there cometh up a nation against ³
her,

Which shall make her land desolate,

And none shall dwell therein :

² Or,
*broken
down*

^a This prophecy is compiled very largely from extracts out of the earlier prophecies of Jeremiah, and is probably not his work. See Introduction, p. 45.

^b Merodach or Marduk, often called Bel (= baal, 'lord'), the sun-god, was the most important Babylonian deity.

They are fled,
They are gone,
Both man and beast.

*The return of Israel and Judah to Jehovah after the
release from Babylon. l. 4-8.*

- 4 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD,
The children of Israel shall come,
They and the children of Judah together ;
They shall go on their way weeping^a,
And shall seek the LORD their God.
- 5 They shall inquire concerning Zion^b
With their faces¹ thitherward, *saying*.
Come ye^c, and ² join yourselves to the LORD
In an everlasting covenant that shall not be for-
gotten.
- 6 My people hath been lost sheep :
Their shepherds^d have caused them to go astray,
They have turned them away on the mountains ;
They have gone from mountain to hill,
They have forgotten their resting place.
- 7 All that found them have devoured them :
And their adversaries said, We offend not^e,
Because they have sinned against the LORD, the
habitation of justice,
Even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.
- 8 Flee out of the midst of Babylon,
And go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans,
And be as the he-goats^f before the flocks.

¹ Heb.
*hither-
ward.*

² Or, *they
shall join
themselves*

Great and warlike nations will spoil Babylon. l. 9-10.

- 9 For, lo, I will stir up and cause to come up against^g
Babylon
An assembly of great nations from the north country :
And they shall set themselves in array against her ;
From thence she shall be taken^h :
Their arrows shall be as of³ an expert mighty man :
⁴ None shall return in vain.

³ Or, ac-
cording to
another
reading,
*a mighty
man that
maketh
childless*
⁴ Or, *That
returneth
not*

^a In recollection of their past humiliation.

^b i. e. they ask their way to Zion. ^c The words are spoken to each other.

^d i. e. their rulers. Instead of keeping them from error, they have encour-
aged it.

^e We are but the instruments of Divine judgement on sin. Cf. Isa. xxxvi. 10.

^f i. e. lead the way. The words are addressed to the new rulers contrasted
with the misleading shepherds of ver. 6.

^g From Babylon shall the people be taken captive.

And Chaldea shall be a spoil :
All that spoil her shall be satisfied,

10

Saith the LORD.

Babylon's fate is Jehovah's punishment for her treatment of Israel. l. 11-18.

Because ye are glad, because ye rejoice,

11

O ye that plunder mine heritage,

¹ Or, at
grass

Because ye are wanton as an heifer ¹ that treadeth out
the corn,

And neigh as strong horses ;

Your mother ^a shall be sore ashamed ;

12

She that bare you shall be confounded :

Behold, she shall be the hindermost of the nations,

A wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be ¹³
inhabited,

But it shall be wholly desolate :

Every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished,

And hiss at all her plagues.

Set yourselves in array against Babylon round about, ¹⁴

All ye that bend the bow ;

Shoot at her, spare no arrows :

For she hath sinned against the LORD.

Shout against her round about ;

15

² Heb.
given her
hand.

She hath ² submitted herself ;

Her bulwarks are fallen,

Her walls are thrown down :

For it is the vengeance of the LORD ; take vengeance
upon her ;

As she hath done, do unto her.

Cut off the sower from Babylon,

16

And him that handleth the sickle in the time of
harvest :

For fear of the oppressing sword

They shall turn every one to his people,

And they shall flee every one to his own land ^b.

Israel is a scattered sheep ;

17

The lions have driven him away :

First the king of Assyria hath devoured him :

And last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath
broken his bones.

^a i. e. the nation, personified as the mother of those belonging to it ; or, the metropolis.

^b All foreign mercenaries, and especially the labourers in the fields, would leave the country.

18 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel :

Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land,

As I have punished the king of Assyria.

But Israel will return to his pasture and be forgiven all his sins. l. 19-20.

19 And I will bring Israel again to his ¹pasture, ¹ Or, fold
And he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan,
And his soul^a shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead.

20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD,
The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for,
And there shall be none ;
And the sins of Judah,
And they shall not be found :
For I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant.

The 'utter destruction' of the hammer of the world is Jehovah's work to secure Israel's release. l. 21-28.

21 Go up against the land of ²Merathaim^b, even² That is,
against it, *Double*
And against the inhabitants of ³Pekod^b : *rebellion.†*
Slay and ⁴utterly destroy^c after them, ³ That is,
Visitation.†
Saith the LORD,
And do according to all that I have commanded thee. ⁴ Heb.
devote.†

22 A sound of battle is in the land,
And of great destruction.

23 How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken !
How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations !

24 I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken,
O Babylon,
And thou wast not aware :

^a i.e. appetite. The nation is again compared to a flock of sheep.

^b Both these names are here used symbolically of Babylon ; the first meaning, according to the vocalisation, either 'double bitterness' with reference to its fate, or 'double rebellion' with reference to its character ; the second 'visitation', i.e. punishment. The first may have been suggested by Marrâtîm, a name of South Babylonia ; while a name closely corresponding to the second is actually that of a tribe and district in South Babylonia.

^c A term constantly employed for the devotion of an enemy, especially the Canaanites, by 'a sort' of human sacrifice to God. See Josh. vi. 21 ; viii. 26, &c. The words 'after them' are an accidental insertion by a copyist.

Thou art found, and also caught,
Because thou hast striven against the LORD.

The LORD hath opened his armoury, 25
And hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation :

For the Lord, the LORD of hosts, hath a work *to do*
In the land of the Chaldeans.

¹ Or,
from every
quarter

² Or,
granaries

+ ³ Heb.,
devote her.

Come against her ¹ from the utmost border, 26
Open her ² storehouses :

Cast her up as heaps, and ³ destroy her utterly :

Let nothing of her be left.

Slay all her bullocks ; 27

Let them go down to the slaughter :

Woe unto them ! for their day is come,

The time of their visitation.

The voice of them that flee and escape 28

Out of the land of Babylon,

To declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our
God,

The vengeance of his temple.

Babylon's fall is due to her pride. l. 29-32.

⁴ Or, *many*

Call together ⁴ the archers against Babylon, 29

All them that bend the bow ;

Camp against her round about ;

Let none thereof escape :

Recompense her according to her work ;

According to all that she hath done, do unto her :

For she hath been proud against the LORD,

Against the Holy One of Israel.

Therefore shall her young men fall in her streets, 30

And all her men of war shall be brought to silence
in that day,

Saith the LORD.

⁵ Heb.
O Pride.

Behold, I am against thee, ⁵ O thou proud one, 31

Saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts :

For thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee.

⁶ Heb.
Pride.

And ⁶ the proud one shall stumble and fall, 32

And none shall raise him up :

And I will kindle a fire in his cities,

And it shall devour all that are round about him.

*In spite of Babylon's obstinacy Jehovah will successfully
plead the cause of His people. l. 33-34.*

33 Thus saith the LORD of hosts :

The children of Israel and the children of Judah
are oppressed together :

And all that took them captives hold them fast ;

They refuse to let them go.

34 Their redeemer is strong ; the LORD of hosts is his
name :

He shall throughly plead their cause,

That he may give rest to the earth,

And disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

The sword of destruction. l. 35-37.

35 A sword is upon the Chaldeans,

Saith the LORD,

And upon the inhabitants of Babylon,

And upon her princes,

And upon her wise men.

36 A sword is upon the ¹boasters,

¹ Heb.
boastings.

And they shall dote :

A sword is upon her mighty men,

And they shall be dismayed.

37 A sword is upon their horses,

And upon their chariots,

And upon all the mingled people that are in
the midst of her,

And they shall become as women :

A sword is upon her treasures,

And they shall be robbed.

The drought of desolation. l. 38-40.

38 A drought is upon her waters,

And they shall be dried up :

For it is a land of graven images,

And they are mad upon ²idols.

39 ³Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the

² Heb.
terrors.†

⁴wolves shall dwell there,

³ See Is.
xiii. 21, 22.†

And the ostriches shall dwell therein :

And it shall be no more inhabited for ever ;

⁴ Heb.
howling
creatures.†

Neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to
generation.

40 As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah

And the neighbour cities thereof,

Saith the LORD ;

So shall no man dwell there,

Neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.

*Babylon's invasion by a cruel and terror-inspiring foe
from the ends of the earth*^a. l. 41-43.

†¹ See
ch. vi. 22-24.

¹ Behold, a people cometh from the north ; 41
And a great nation, and many kings shall be stirred
up

From the uttermost parts of the earth.
They lay hold on bow and spear ; 42
They are cruel, and have no mercy ;
Their voice roareth like the sea,
And they ride upon horses ;
Every one set in array, as a man to the battle,
Against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

The king of Babylon hath heard the fame of them, 43
And his hands wax feeble :
Anguish hath taken hold of him,
And pangs as of a woman in travail.

*The foe will come as a lion by Jehovah's irresistible
decree*^b. l. 44-46.

†² See ch.
xlix. 19-21.

² Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the pride 44
of Jordan^c

Against the strong habitation :
But I will suddenly make them run away from her ;
And whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her :
For who is like me ?
And who will appoint me a time ?
And who is the shepherd that will stand before
me ?

Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, 45
That he hath taken against Babylon ;
And his purposes,

That he hath purposed against the land of the
Chaldeans :
Surely they shall drag them away,
Even the little ones of the flock ;
Surely he shall make their habitation desolate with
them.

At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth 46
trembleth,
And the cry is heard among the nations.

^a This section is an adaptation of vi. 22-24, where it refers to the attack on Jerusalem.

^b This section has been adapted from xlix. 19-21 (in the prophecy against Edom), where see notes.

^c See notes on xii. 5 ; xlix. 19.

*Babylon shall be winnowed that Jehovah may help
Israel in spite of his guilt. li. 1-6.*

51 Thus saith the LORD :

Behold, I will raise up against Babylon,
And against them that dwell in ¹ Leb-kamai ^a,
A destroying wind.

2 And I will send unto Babylon ² strangers, that shall
fan her ;

And they shall empty her land :
For in the day of trouble
They shall be against her round about.

3 ³ Let not the archer bend his bow,
And let him not lift himself up in his coat of mail ^b :

And spare ye not her young men ;

⁴ Destroy ye utterly all her host.

4 And they shall fall down slain in the land of the
Chaldeans,

And thrust through in her streets.

5 For Israel is not forsaken,

Nor Judah, of his God,

Of the LORD of hosts ;

Though their land is full of guilt
Against the Holy One of Israel.

6 Flee out of the midst of Babylon,

And save every man his life ;

Be not cut off in her iniquity :

For it is the time of the LORD's vengeance ;

He will render unto her a recompence.

By the judgement on the 'golden cup' Israel is vindicated. li. 7-10.

7 Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD's hand,

That made all the earth drunken ^c :

The nations have drunk of her wine ;

Therefore the nations are mad.

8 Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed :

Howl for her ;

Take balm for her pain,

If so be she may be healed.

9 We would have healed Babylon,

¹ That is,
*The heart
of them that
rise up
against me.*
According
to ancient
tradition, a
cypher for
Casdim,
that is,
Chaldea.†

² Or,
fanners

³ Or, as
otherwise
read,

*Against
him that
bendeth let
the archer
bend his
bow, and
against him
that lifteth
himself up
&c.*

⁴ Heb.
*Devote ye
all &c.*†

^a An *Atbash* cypher for 'Chaldees'. See note on xxv. 26.

^b Let them not attempt a useless defence. But the text is uncertain.

^c See xxv. 15 ff.

But she is not healed ^a :
 Forsake her, and let us go every one into his own
 country ^b :
 For her judgement reacheth unto heaven,
 And is lifted up even to the skies.
 The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness : 10
 Come, and let us declare in Zion
 The work of the LORD our God.

*Jehovah's work of punishment will be wrought by
 the Medes. li. 11-14.*

† ¹ Or,
 bright
 Heb. *clean*.
² Heb. *Fill*.
³ Or, *suits*
of armour

Make ¹ sharp the arrows ; 11
² Hold firm the ³ shields ^c :
 The LORD hath stirred up the spirit of the kings of
 the Medes ;
 Because his device is against Babylon, to destroy it :
 For it is the vengeance of the LORD,
 The vengeance of his temple.
 Set up a standard against the walls of Babylon, 12
 Make the watch strong,
 Set the watchmen,
 Prepare the ambushes :
 For the LORD hath both devised and done
 That which he spake concerning the inhabitants of
 Babylon.

⁴ Or, *dis-
 honest gain*

O thou that dwellest upon many waters ^d, 13
 Abundant in treasures,
 Thine end is come,
 The measure of thy ⁴ covetousness ^e.
 The LORD of hosts hath sworn by himself, *saying*, 14
 Surely I will fill thee with men, as with the canker-
 worm ^f ;
 And they shall lift up a shout against thee.

^a These four lines are a poetical way of saying that her wound is incurable.

^b These words are said by the Israelitish captives in Babylon, to whom also the two previous lines are probably to be referred. They would have assisted Babylon against her foes if it had been possible.

^c These words are addressed to the Medes.

^d Besides the Euphrates, Babylon was surrounded by many canals and marshes.

^e Better, the cubit of thy cutting off ; i. e. the proper length at which the thread of life should be cut off from the loom. Cf. Isa. xxxviii, 12.

^f A particular kind of locust, or a locust of a certain stage of growth.

*A declaration contrasting Jehovah's wisdom and power
with the impotent stupidity of idol-worshippers^a.*

li. 15-19.

- 15 ¹ He hath made the earth by his power,
He hath established the world by his wisdom,
And by his understanding hath he stretched out the
heavens :
- 16 When he uttereth his voice, there is a tumult of
waters in the heavens,
And he causeth the vapours to ascend from the
ends of the earth ;
He maketh lightnings for the rain,
And bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures ^b.
- 17 Every man is become brutish *and is* without know-
ledge ;
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven
image :
For his molten image is falsehood,
And there is no breath in them.
- 18 They are vanity, a work of delusion :
In the time of their visitation they shall perish.
- 19 The portion of Jacob is not like these ;
For he is the former of all things ;
And *Israel* is the tribe of his inheritance :
The LORD of hosts is his name.

* * * *

Jehovah's battle axe (Cyrus?) will shatter Babylon.

li. 20-24.

- 20 Thou art my ² battle axe and weapons of war : ² Or, *maul*
And with thee will I break in pieces the nations ;
And with thee will I destroy kingdoms ;
- 21 And with thee will I break in pieces the horse
and his rider ;
And with thee will I break in pieces the chariot
and him that rideth therein ;
- 22 And with thee will I break in pieces man and
woman ;
And with thee will I break in pieces the old man
and the youth ;
And with thee will I break in pieces the young
man and the maid ;
- 23 And with thee will I break in pieces the shepherd
and his flock ;

^a See notes on x. 1 and 12. Verses 15-19 have no reference to Babylon, and are evidently an interpolation,

^b See note on x. 13.

And with thee will I break in pieces the husband-
man and his yoke *of oxen* ;

¹ Or,
lieutenants

And with thee will I break in pieces ¹ governors
and deputies ^a.

And I will render unto Babylon and to all the in-²⁴
habitants of Chaldea

All their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight,
Saith the LORD.

The destroying mountain overthrown. li. 25-26.

Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, ²⁵
saith the LORD,

Which destroyest all the earth :

And I will stretch out mine hand upon thee,

And roll thee down from the rocks,

And will make thee a burnt mountain ^b.

And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, ²⁶

Nor a stone for foundations ;

But thou shalt be desolate for ever,

Saith the LORD.

Different nations summoned to the attack. li. 27-28.

Set ye up a standard in the land, ²⁷

Blow the trumpet among the nations,

[†] ² Heb.
Sanctify.

² Prepare the nations against her,

Call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat,
Minni, and Ashkenaz ^c :

Appoint a marshal against her ;

Cause the horses to come up as the rough canker-
worm ^d.

² Prepare against her the nations, the kings of the ²⁸
Medes,

The governors thereof, and all the deputies ^e
thereof,

And all the land of his dominion.

*A graphic picture of the results of Babylon's
invasion.* li. 29-33.

And the land trembleth and is in pain : ²⁹

For the purposes of the LORD against Babylon do
stand,

^a Two names for dependent rulers, whose exact functions are not known.

^b Hollow like a burnt-out volcano, whose stones are useless for building.

^c Armenia and neighbouring tribes in and about Asia Minor.

^d See note on ver. 14.

^e See note on ver. 23.

To make the land of Babylon a desolation,
Without inhabitant.

30 The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight,
They remain in their strong holds ;
Their might hath failed ;
They are become as women :
Her dwelling places are set on fire ;
Her bars are broken.

31 One post^a shall run to meet another,
And one messenger to meet another,
To shew the king of Babylon

That his city is taken on every quarter :

32 And the ¹ passages^b are surprised,
And the ² reeds they have burned with fire^c,
And the men of war are affrighted.

¹ Or, *fords*

² Or,
marshes
Heb. *pools*.

33 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel :
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor
At the time when it is trodden^d ;
Yet a little while, and the time of harvest shall
come for her.

*Judah's cry for vengeance on Babylon is heard and
answered by Jehovah. li. 34-40.*

34 Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon
Hath devoured³ me, he hath crushed³ me,
He hath made³ me an empty vessel,
He hath swallowed³ me up like a dragon^e,
He hath filled his maw with my delicates^f ;
He hath cast³ me out.

³ Another
reading is,
us.

35 ⁴ The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon⁴
Babylon,
Shall the ⁵ inhabitant of Zion say ;
And, My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea,
Shall Jerusalem say.

⁴ Heb. *My
wrong and
my flesh*.
⁵ Heb.
inhabitantess.

36 Therefore thus saith the LORD :
Behold, I will plead thy cause,

^a i. e. a bearer of royal dispatches. These runners jostle against each other, as they come from all quarters to inform the king, who is directing movements from a central point within the city.

^b Places of crossing. Ferries and perhaps bridges.

^c Probably a reference to the burning of the reeds (lit. marshes).

^d She will be trodden under foot like the corn that is threshed.

^e Here a crocodile may be meant, but more probably it is the mystical dragon which caused the sea-storm and the earthquake. Cf. Isa. xxvii. 1 ; Ezek. xxxii. 2-6.

^f Dainty meats, i. e. precious spoils.

And take vengeance for thee ;
 And I will dry up her sea ^a,
 And make her fountain ^b dry.
 And Babylon shall become heaps, 37
 A dwelling place for jackals,
 An astonishment, and an hissing,
 Without inhabitant.
 They shall roar together like young lions ; 38
 They shall growl as lions' whelps.
 When they are heated, I will make their feast, 39
 And I will make them drunken, that they may
 rejoice,
 And sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake ^c,
 Saith the LORD.
 I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, 40
 Like rams with he-goats ^d.

Lamentation over Babylon's fate. li. 41-43.

† ¹ See
 ch. xxv. 26.

† ² Or, an
 astonish-
 ment

† ³ Or,
 tumult

How is ¹ Sheshach ^e taken ! 41
 And the praise of the whole earth surprised !
 How is Babylon become ² a desolation among the
 nations !
 The sea ^f is come up upon Babylon : 42
 She is covered with the ³ multitude of the waves
 thereof.
 Her cities are become ² a desolation, 43
 A dry land, and a desert,
 A land wherein no man dwelleth,
 Neither doth any son of man pass thereby.

*Babylon is made to disgorge her spoils and
 captives. li. 44-46.*

† ¹ Heb.
 visit upon.

And I will ¹ do judgement upon Bel^g in Babylon, 44
 And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which
 he hath swallowed up ;
 And the nations shall not flow together any more
 unto him ^h :

^a The waters which surrounded her, and on which her fertility and safety depended. Cf. Isa. xxi. 1, and see note on ver. 13.

^b A poetical word for well, here as a source of life and vigour.

^c While roaring like lions over their prey at a feast of exultation, God will make them fall into a drunken slumber, from which they will never wake.

^d All classes would perish together.

^e i. e. Babel. See note on xxv. 26.

^f i. e. the invading armies.

^g See note on l. 2. The allusion in the next line is probably, however, not so much to offerings of devotees as to the spoils and tribute which Babylon would be made to disgorge.

^h Contrast Isa. ii. 2.

Yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.

- 45 My people, go ye out of the midst of her ^a,
And save yourselves every man
From the fierce anger of the LORD.
46 ^b And let not your heart faint, neither fear ye
For the rumour that shall be heard in the land ;
For a rumour shall come one year ^c,
And after that in another year *shall come a*
rumour,
And violence in the land,
Ruler against ruler.

*Exultation of heaven and earth over Babylon's just
judgement. li. 47-49.*

- 47 Therefore, behold, the days come,
That I will do judgement upon the graven
images of Babylon,
And her whole land shall be ashamed ;
And all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.
48 Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is
therein,
Shall sing for joy over Babylon ;
For the spoilers shall come unto her from the north,
Saith the LORD.

- 49 ¹ As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall,
So at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the ² land ^c.

*Israel's humiliated remnant encouraged and
cheered. li. 50-51.*

- 50 Ye that have escaped the sword,
Go ye, stand not still ;
Remember the LORD from afar ^d,
And let Jerusalem come into your mind.
51 We ^e are ashamed,
Because we have heard reproach ;
Confusion hath covered our faces :
For strangers are come
Into the sanctuaries of the LORD's house ^e.

^a Lest they become involved in the punishment of Babylon.

^b They were not to be disturbed by rumours and political factions which would arise *before* the overthrow of Babylon.

^c No satisfactory rendering and interpretation of these lines can be given, and the text is probably corrupt.

^d From Chaldea, which is far away from Zion, God's dwelling-place. Cf. xxx. 10.

^e These words express the reluctance of the captives to return to the desecrated city.

¹ Or, *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and at &c.*

² Or, *earth*

By the judgement on Babylon Jehovah would make up to them for the shame of the desecration of their holy places by Nebuchadrezzar. li. 52-58.

Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, ⁵²
That I will do judgement upon her graven
images;

And through all her land the wounded shall
groan.

Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, ⁵³
And though she should fortify the height of her
strength,

Yet from me shall spoilers come unto her,
Saith the LORD.

The sound ^a of a cry from Babylon, ⁵⁴
And of great destruction from the land of the
Chaldeans!

For the LORD spoileth Babylon, ⁵⁵
And destroyeth out of her the great voice;
And their waves ^b roar like many waters,
The noise of their voice is uttered:

For the spoiler is come upon her, ⁵⁶
Even upon Babylon,
And her mighty men are taken,
Their bows are broken in pieces:
For the LORD is a God of recompences,
He shall surely requite.

And I will make drunk her princes and her wise ⁵⁷
men,

Her governors and her deputies^c, and her mighty
men;
And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not
wake ^d,

Saith the King, whose name is the LORD of
hosts.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts: ⁵⁸

¹ The broad walls ^e of Babylon shall be utterly
² overthrown,

¹ Or, *The walls of broad Babylon*
² Or, *made bare*

^a More literally, voice. This word is used, intentionally it would seem, of three different things in these two verses: the cry of anguish as the enemy came upon them, the hubbub of the busy life of a great city, and the voice of the invading foe.

^b i. e. of the approaching enemy. Cf. ver. 42; Isa. v. 30; xvii. 12.

^c See note on ver. 23.

^d Cf. ver. 39.

^e According to Herodotus i. 178, they were 85 feet thick.

And her high gates shall be burned with fire ;

¹ And the peoples shall labour for vanity,

And the nations for the fire ^a ;

And they shall be weary.

¹ See
Hab. ii. 13.†

APPENDIX RECORDING THE HISTORY OF
THIS PROPHECY.

A message to Babylon. li. 59–64.

- 59 The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded
Seraiah the son of Neriah ^b, the son of Mahseiah ^c,
when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to
Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah
60 was ² chief chamberlain ^d. And Jeremiah wrote in ³ ^a ² Or,
book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, ^{quarter-}
even all these words that are written concerning Baby- ^{master}
61 lon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou ³ Or,
comest to Babylon, ^{one book}
62 words, and say, O LORD, thou hast spoken concerning ⁴ Or, and
this place, to cut it off, that none shall dwell therein, ^{shalt see,}
neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ^{and read...}
63 ever ^e. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end ^{then shalt}
of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, ^{thou say}
and cast it into the midst of Euphrates : and thou
64 shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise ⁵ Or, upon
again because of the evil that I will bring ^{her.} upon her : ^{And}
and they shall be weary. ^{they shall}
^{be weary :}
Thus far are the words of Jeremiah. ^{thus far}
^{&c.}

^a See note on Hab. ii. 13.

^b The repetition of the words 'and they shall be weary' in ver. 64 makes it probable that in some copies the clause 'Thus far' &c. followed immediately after ver. 58 and that verses 59–64 were wanting. It is not unlikely that these verses did not belong originally to the book of prophecies against the nations, but have been transferred from the main part of the book. Dr. Driver suggests that 60b is the insertion of the compiler.

^c Probably therefore a brother of Baruch. See xxxvi. 4 ; xlv. 1. This was probably a visit of homage demanded by Nebuchadrezzar in consequence of the attempts made by the Edomites, Moabites, &c., to persuade Zedekiah to join in a revolt against the Chaldeans. See xxvii. 3.

^d Lit. the prince of resting-place ; i. e. one who arranged for night-quarters on a royal expedition.

^e Cf. l. 3 ; li. 26, to which some commentators find a direct allusion. The apparent contradiction between ver. 62 and the Philo-Babylonian prophecy of xxvii is explained by the hints in the latter chapter that the dominion of Babylon is not final. Cf. verses 7 and 22.

An Historical Appendix. lii.

I. THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM ^a.
lii. 1-30.*The capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans.* lii. 1-11.† ¹ See
2 Kings
xxiv. 18, &c.

¹ Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he **52**
began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in
Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal the
daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which ²
was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that
Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the ³
LORD did it come to pass in Jerusalem and Judah,
until he had cast them out from his presence: and
Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon ^b. And ⁴
it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the
tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that
Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all
his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against
it; and they built forts against it round about. So ⁵
the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king
Zedekiah. In the fourth month, in the ninth day of ⁶
the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that
there was no bread for the people of the land. Then ⁷
a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war
fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the
way of the gate between the two walls, which was by
the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were against
the city round about:) and they went by the way of
the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued ⁸
after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of
Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.
Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the ⁹
king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath;
and he ² gave judgement upon him. And the king of ¹⁰
Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he
slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. And he ¹¹
put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Baby-
lon bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon,
and put him in prison till the day of his death.

² Heb.
spake
judgements
with him.

^a This was evidently copied from 2 Kings xxiv. 18-xxv. but presents, *on the whole*, a more accurate text than what we now have in that book. It was probably added here as being so closely connected with the fortunes of Jeremiah.

^b For verses 4-11, 13-16, see xxxix. 1-2, 4-10, which follow this text in what appear to be later interpolations.

The treatment of the city and its inhabitants.

lii. 12-16.

- 12 Now in the fifth month, in the tenth^a day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, which stood before the king of
- 13 Babylon, into Jerusalem: and he burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, even ¹every great house, burned he with ¹Or, every great man's house
- 14 fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the
- 15 walls of Jerusalem round about. Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the poorest sort of the people, and the residue of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the
- 16 residue of the ²multitude. But Nebuzaradan the ²Or, + artificers captain of the guard left of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

The vessels of the sanctuary^b carried away.

lii. 17-23.

- 17 And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases and the brasen sea that were in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.
- 18 The pots also, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.
- 19 And the cups, and the firepans, and the basons, and the pots, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the bowls; that which was of gold, in gold, and that which was of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard
- 20 took away. The two pillars^c, the one sea, and the twelve brasen bulls that were under the bases, which king Solomon had made for the house of the LORD:
- 21 the brass of all these vessels was without weight. And as for the pillars, the height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a line of twelve cubits did

^a 'The seventh' in 2 Kings xxv. 8.^b For this description of the furniture of the Temple cf. 1 Kings vii. 15-50. The account here is fuller than in 2 Kings xxv, but there appears to be some confusion of text, at least in verses 18-19, where 'pots', 'basons' are enumerated twice, and in ver. 23 (where see Driver).^c i. e. the two great pillars known as Jachin and Boaz (1 Kings vii. 21).

compass it; and the thickness thereof was four fingers: it was hollow^a. And a chapter^b of brass²² was upon it; and the height of the one chapter was five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and the second pillar also had like unto these, and pomegranates. And there were ninety and six pomegranates¹ on the²³ sides: all the pomegranates were an hundred upon the network round about.

^a Or, on the outside
Heb.
towards the four winds.

Punishment of the principal offenders. lii. 24-27.

And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief²⁴ priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the² door: and out of the city he took an²⁵ officer that was set over the men of war: and seven^c men of them that saw the king's face, which were found in the city; and the scribe of the captain of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and three-score men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city. And Nebuzaradan the cap-²⁶ tain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the king of Babylon²⁷ smote them, and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath.

² Heb.
threshold.
^c Or,
cavalry

An enumeration of the Jewish captives^d. lii. 28-30.

So Judah was carried away captive out of his land. This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried²⁸ away captive: in the seventh year three thousand

^a This addition to the statement in 1 Kings vii. 15 is very interesting, as explaining the enormous circumference of the shafts, about fifteen feet or more.

^b i.e. the capital at the top of the shaft. Capitals of network pattern derived from the East became a common feature of Byzantine architecture, and are to be seen in the Dome of the Rock on the Temple area at Jerusalem at the present day.

^c 2 Kings xxv. 19 reads 'five'.

^d This statistical statement is an addition by the compiler or later reviser. It is not easy to explain with certainty either the occasions referred to or the numbers. In the first, which at first sight appears to be the exportation in the time of Jehoiachin, the numbers in 2 Kings xxiv. 14 are given as 10,000. Lwaid, followed by Keil and others, suggested reading for 'seventh' seventeenth in vii. 28, thus making all three refer to Zedekiah's reign. The first being at the beginning of the siege would refer to the country of Judah, as distinct from Jerusalem. The last, which is easily explained by the events of ch. xli, is not mentioned elsewhere. G. A. Smith shews that a large majority of the Jewish people—some scores of thousands—remained in Judah through all the period of the Exile. They were, however, 'the poorest of the land—a negligible quantity in the religious future of Israel: without initiative or any influence except that of a dead weight upon the efforts of the rebuilders of the nation when these at last returned from Babylonia.' (*Jerusalem*, ii. 269, 270.)

29 Jews and three and twenty : in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons : in the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons : all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.

2. EVIL-MERODACH'S KINDNESS TO JEHOIACHIN.

lii. 31-34.

31 ¹ And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach ^a king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, lifted up the head ^b of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison ;
 32 and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.
 33 And he changed his prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life.
 34 And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

^a A son of Nebuchadrezzar, according to Berossus a man of dissolute life. As he reigned only two years this treatment of Jehoiachin must have been continued by his brother-in-law Neriglissar. See note on xxxix. 3.

^b Cf. Gen. xl. 13, 20. It probably means 'dealt kindly with', from the thought of lifting the head of the crouching suppliant. The similar phrase 'to lift the face', often translated 'respect persons', is more common.

AN ARRANGEMENT OF THE PROPHECIES, ETC. OF JEREMIAH IN THEIR APPROXIMATE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER¹

- I. Connected with the reign of Josiah (639-608 B. C.), i-vi; vii. 29-ix. 22²; x. 17-xi. 8.
- II. Connected with the reign of Jehoahaz (608 B. C., 3 mths.), xxii. 10-12.
- III. Connected with the reign of Jehoiakim (608-598 B. C.), vii. 1-28 and xxvi; ³ viii. 4-ix. 22; xi. 9-xx²; xxii. 1-9, 13-23; xxv; xxxv; xxxvi; xlv.
- IV. Connected with the reign of Jehoiachin (597 B. C., 3 mths), xiii. 18, 19; xxii. 24-30.
- V. Connected with the reign of Zedekiah (597-586 B. C.)
 - (a) *Before the invasion*: xxiii⁴; xxiv; xxvii-xxix; xlix. 34-39; li. 59-64.
 - (b) *At the beginning of the invasion*: xxx-xxxii.
 - (c) *During the siege*: xxi. (cf. xxxiv. 1-7); xxxii-xxxiv⁵; xxxvii-xxxix.
 - (d) *After the siege*: xl-xliv.
- VI. Prophecies against the nations; written, in the main, by Jeremiah, at different times, but probably revised at a later date, xlv-xlix.
- VII. Passages, with greater or less probability, later than Jeremiah, (?) ix. 23-26; x. 1-16; 1-li. 58; lii.

¹ See Introd., pp. 44, 45.

² But see note on viii. 4-ix. 22.

³ Except xiii. 18, 19.

⁴ Except verses 19, 20 (where see note).

⁵ But see note on xxxiii. 14-26.

LECTIONARY TABLE

Shewing the days on which the several chapters or sections of the books
of the Prophets in this volume are appointed to be read in the
services of the Church of England.

SUNDAY OR HOLY DAY	MORNING	EVENING	EVENING
Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity .	Jer. v	Jer. xxii	Jer. xxxv.
Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity .	xxxvi		
Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity (Epistle)	xxiii. 5-8		
Twenty-sixth Sunday after Trinity .	Hab. ii	Hab. iii	Zeph. iii
Innocents' Day (Dec. 28) . . .	Jer. xxxi. 1-17		
Conversion of St. Paul (Jan. 25) . .		Jer. i. 1-10	
St. Barnabas (June 11) . . .		Nahum i	
St. James, Apostle (July 25) . . .		Jer. xxvi. 8-15	
St. Simon and St. Jude's Day (Oct. 28)		iii. 12-18	

DAILY LESSONS

DATE	MORNING	EVENING	DATE	MORNING	EVENING
Aug.			Aug.		
8		Jer. i	21	Jer. xxxiii. 1-13	Jer. xxxiii. 14-26
9	Jer. ii. 1-13	v. 1-18	22	xxxv	xxxvi. 1-13
10	v. 19-31	vi. 1-21	23	xxxvi. 14-32	xxxviii. 1-13
11	vii. 1-16	viii. 4-22	25	xxxviii. 14-28	xxxix
12	ix. 1-16	xiii. 8-23	26	l. 1-20	li. 54-64
13	xv	xvii. 1-18			
14	xviii. 1-17	xix	Oct.		
15	xxi	xxii. 1-12	10		Nah. i
16	xxii. 13-30	xxiii. 1-15	11	Nah. ii	iii
17	xxiv	xxv. 1-14	12	Hab. i	Hab. ii
18	xxvi	xxviii	13	iii	Zeph. i. 1-13
19	xxix. 4-19	xxx	14	Zeph. i. 14-ii. 3	ii. 4-15
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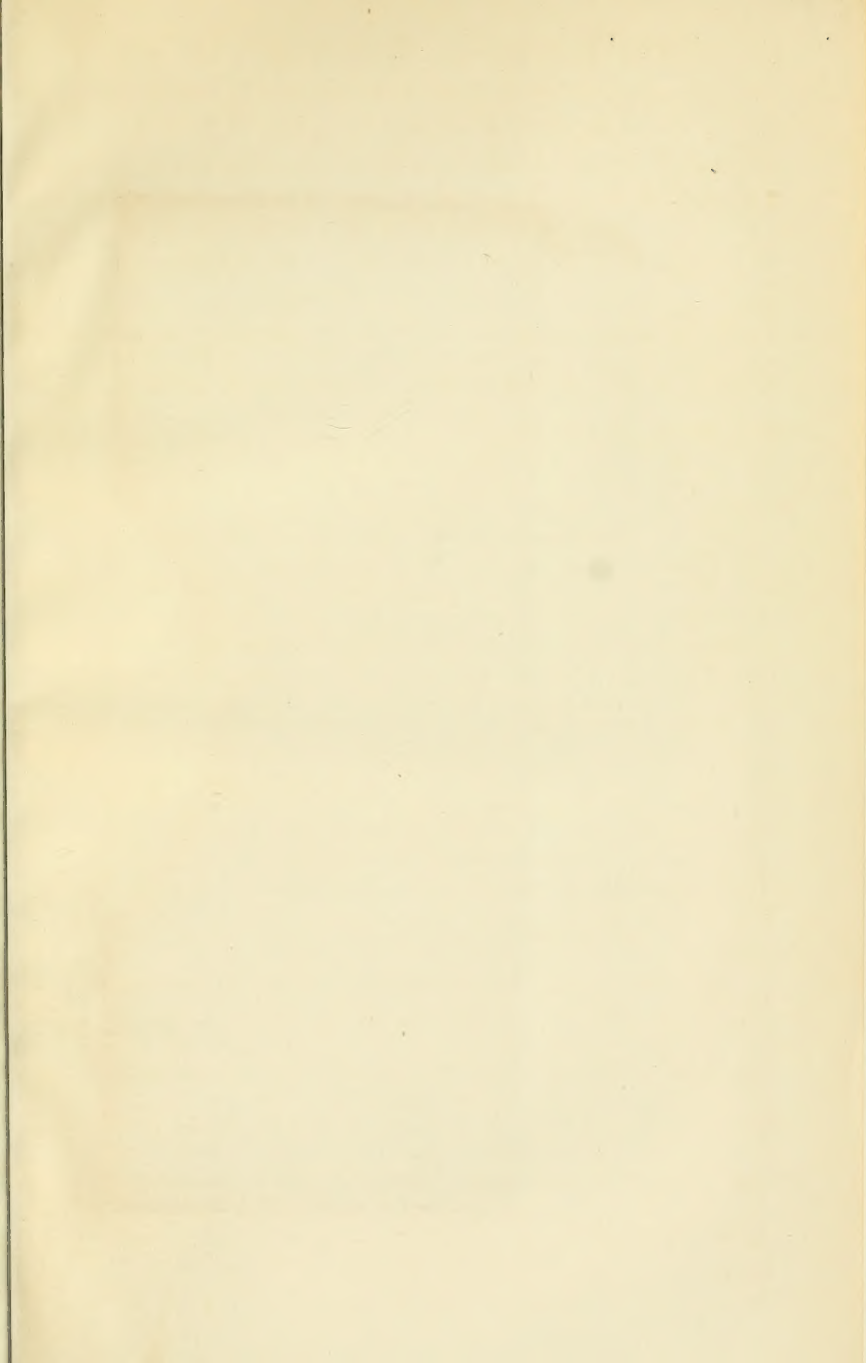
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